

2D Artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine
Issue 019 July 2007 \$4 / €3.25 / £2.25

Imaginary Friends Studios

We catch up with Edmund and the gang over at Imaginary Friends Studios to see how things have gone since we last chatted in the first issue of 2D Artist and to talk about their new book.



Articles

Imaginary Friends Studios & more...



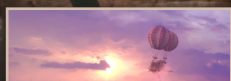
Interviews

Jeremy Mohler, Derick Tsai, Brenton Cottman & more...



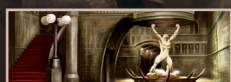
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Making Of's

Cold Sky & Self Version



Tutorials

Our New Tutorial Series: Using 3D as a Starting Point for a Digital Painting, & more...



Editorial Welcome to the 19th issue of 2D Artist Magazine. This month we have some special treats for you... We caught up with our old friends, Imaginary Friends Studios (originally featured in Issue 001), who have kindly given us 3 copies of their fantastic new book, "Imaginary: Prime: The Art of Imaginary Friends Studios" - for 3 lucky readers!!! These books arrived in our studio this very morning,

and greatly impressed us all, so much so in fact that we don't really want to give them away, now (boo!). The 3 winners of this book will receive 246 pages of full-colour "Imaginary Goodness"! Enter the competition on page 129 for your chance to win a copy, and don't miss the interview with them on page 46 to discover just how IFS has grown in the last 19 months (just check out their studios and all those toys! Wow!!). We are also pleased to welcome Melanie Delon back this month, who teaches us all how to create the custom brushes that she uses to paint the skin in her beautiful masterpieces – you really won't want to miss that one! After learning a few tricks of the trade from Melanie on how to paint skin, then why not move on to Anne Pogoda's tutorial on how to paint hair?! You won't have any excuses not to paint after these two great tutorials help you with everything you need to know to get started – so get painting! You never know, we might even be contacting you soon to create a tutorial/making of for us, or to feature your work in our Galleries ;). We also welcome this month the start of a new series of tutorials on Using 3D as a Starting Point for a Digital Painting, by Richard Tilbury. So turn to page 99 to get cracking with that one, and make sure you follow the rest of the series in our future issues to get the most out of Rich and his talents. Our Speed Paintings this month are simply great, and show two very different approaches and end results to the same theme: Destroyed City. As always, our speed painting artists talk you through their painting processes, so why not try one for yourself? You should be able to achieve some pretty impressive results after learning from our artists, this month! I would also like to quickly thank those of you who wrote in after last month's 'plea for help'. We really do appreciate your support and hope that the message will continue to spread far and wide that, in order to keep 2D Artist magazine very much alive, the illegal copying and redistribution of our magazines (whether from friends, co-workers, or dodgy websites) has to stop!! We can't stress this enough, and we hope that you will spread the word for us and help us to keep 2D Artist going for as long as possible. Thanks for taking the time to read this, and I hope you enjoy this issue! *Lynette, Zoo Publishing*

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Ben Barnes

Assistant Editor

Chris Perrins

Content Manager

Warin Pismoke

Layout

Ben Barnes

Chris Perrins

Alex Price

Bobby Brown

Marketing

Lynette Clee

Content

Tom Greenway

Lynette Clee

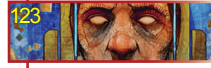
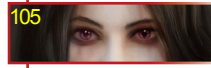
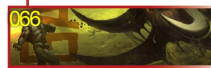
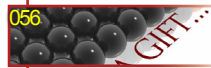
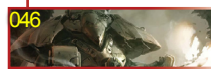
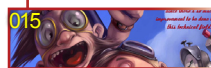
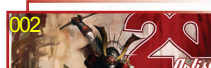
Warin Pismoke

Richard Tilbury

Chris Perrins

Free Stuff!

Wherever you see this symbol, click it to download resources, extras and even movies!



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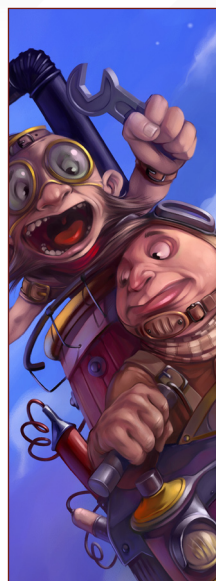
Imaginary Friends Studios' New Book

About us

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Contributing Artists

Every month, many creatives and artists around the world contribute to 3DCreative & 2DArtist magazines. Here you can read all about them. If you would like to be a part of 3DCreative or 2DArtist Magazines, please contact: ben@zoopublishing.com.



Mathieu Leysse, 'Ani'

After studying design in Nantes, France, Matthieu worked in the videogame industry for a French Company, Lankhor, developing games for PC and Play station, until it closed in 2002. He is now a full-time freelance Illustrator, living in Le Mans and working in different fields; board and card games, video games for mobiles, and so on.

ani@anii.com

www.anii.com



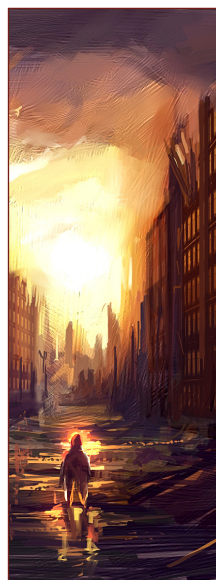
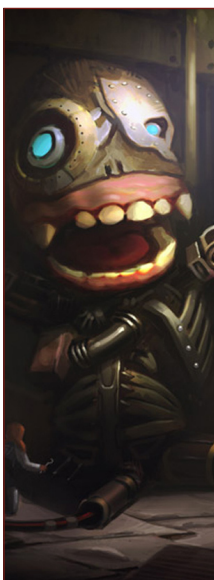
Derick Tsai

Is a Concept Designer, Storyboard Artist, Animatics/Motion Artist and Graphic Designer.

He started in motion graphics in '99 as a Designer/Animator. After 3 years, he decided to try his hand at concept art and recently started his own practice combining both disciplines. His team now handle Obsidian Entertainment's new project, covering areas of concept art, storyboard & animatics, and graphics.

derick@dericktsai.com

www.dericktsai.com

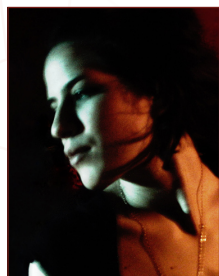


Andreas Rocha

Is a Freelance 2D Artist in Lisbon, Portugal. He has been drawing with traditional media for a long time. Traditional painting has always been a frustration for him, but everything changed when he bought his first tablet 10 years ago! With the boom of Internet galleries and CG forums he has all the tools necessary to pursue his love for digital fantasy painting...

rocha.andreas@gmail.com

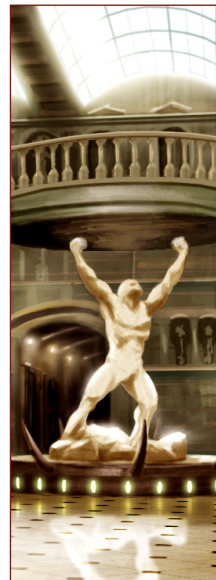
www.andreasrocha.com



Melanie Delon

Is a freelance Illustrator in Paris, France. She usually works with Photoshop CS2, but all her sketches are done in Painter (with a Wacom). She first discovered digital painting last year and has since become addicted to it. All subjects are of interest to Melanie - they just have to talk to her. However, fantasy and dreamy subjects are her favourite subjects... esk@eskarina-circus.com

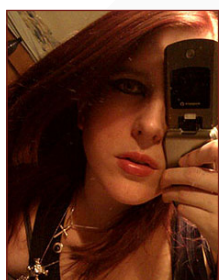
www.eskarina-circus.com



Richard Tilbury

Has had a passion for drawing since he was a couple of feet tall. He studied Fine Art and was eventually led into the realm of computers several years ago. His brushes have slowly dissolved in white spirit since the late nineties and now, alas, his graphics tablet has become their successor. He still sketches regularly and now balances his time between 2D and 3D, although drawing will always be closest to his heart... ibex80@hotmail.com





Anne Pogoda (Mzurelle)

Is a 2D Concept Artist /Illustrator (and such), is a student at the Art Akademy and a freelancer in Berlin, Germany. She

made her first attempts in digital art in 2003. For the last 3 years she has been working on 2D illustrations and concept art with a Wacom Graphire in Photoshop and Painter. She will be learning ZBrush 3 and Maya and would like to do some game/film related work later on...

www.darktownart.de



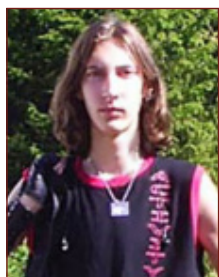
Dominus

Is a 2D Illustrator/ Concept Artist working freelance in Romania. He studied traditional art at the Haricleea Dardale school in

Braila, and then began using the computer to create his artworks. He started using Photoshop about 6 years ago and learnt almost everything from the Internet. Since then, he has been working as a freelance doing concept art and illustration for several movies and games.

dominuzzzz@yahoo.com

www.pandemoniumart.net

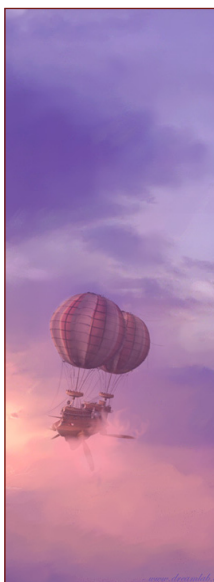


Vlad Kuprienko, aka Duke

Is a CG Artist/3D Modeller working freelance in Kharkov, Ukraine, and Kemi, Finland. He started 3D

five years ago using Bryce 4, then started using Carrara and began modelling in Hexagon. He then started drawing in Painter and Photoshop, and his 2D skills have since grown. He now works in commercial design as 3D Modeller, CG Illustrator and Web Designer.

duke.of.vampires@gmail.com



János Kiss

Designs identities, brochures, flyers etc. and sometimes illustrations for a small company in Budapest, Hungary. Apart from

graphic design, he works to improve his digital painting, which is a pleasure for him. He usually works with Painter and ArtRage. Nowadays, his main goal is to develop his portfolio, demonstrating several styles and techniques.


janos.kiss@28thwing.com



Would you like to Contribute to 3DCreative or 2DOrlist Magazine?

We are always looking for tutorial artists, gallery submissions, potential interviewees, making of writers, and more...

For more information, send a link to your work here: warin@zoopublishing.com



In this interview, we chat to Jeremy Mohler to discover how he went from a farm in Kansas to becoming the amazing illustrator that he is today...

"Honestly though, there really is no method to the madness. I just work on the piece until I feel like the piece works or I've hit the deadline. I don't think I've ever done something the same way twice."

**JERMEY
MOHLER**

Hi Jeremy. Thanks for agreeing to do this interview for 2DArtist; it's great to have the opportunity to chat with you. Starting simply, can you tell us a bit about yourself, and the path which has led you to where we find you today?
A1. Thanks Lynette. It's a pleasure talking with you.

Well, I was born and raised on a farm in north eastern Kansas. Farming, however, just wasn't for me. So once I finished up high school, I found myself headed to the Kansas City Art Institute (KCAI), which I attended until sophomore year. At that time, I was really frustrated with the school and the lack of focus on illustration, so I decided to switch gears and I headed to the east coast to attend the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art (JKS).


And that has probably been one of the best decisions I ever made. Joe Kubert believes in learning through work and I think that I probably did three times as much work in the first semester out there than I did in the entire first two years at the KCAI. If I hadn't attended school there, I certainly wouldn't be where I am now.

I stayed at the JKS for two years, at the end of which I took a year off school. I freelanced a bit doing some work in the role-playing game industry, then I ended up going back to the KCAI and finishing out my BFA in design/illustration in 2004. I've been freelancing ever since, though only the last year and a half have I been doing it full time.

I'm curious; does the childhood that you spent on the farm ever find its way through to your artwork? If so, is it a subconscious thing – memories, feelings, moods, colours, or do you



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prefer to keep a certain distance between your personal thoughts/feelings and your art? With all this in mind, where do you mostly seek your inspiration from for your artworks?

Honestly, I think so. Growing up in Kansas, there was always allot of wide, open space. I grew up with fields all around and no neighbours (well, my Grandparents lived across the street and I had cousins down the street, but no other kids). Just allot of wide open space, rolling hills, and various hedge rows.

I think you can see some of that in my work. I love large, open spaces. I like allot of depth in my art and just the feeling of environments. In fact, I love landscapes in general. I think that could be inspired by some of the environment I grew up around.

So, with the work I do, I have a large reference library of environments to help inspire me. I love mountains and trees especially.

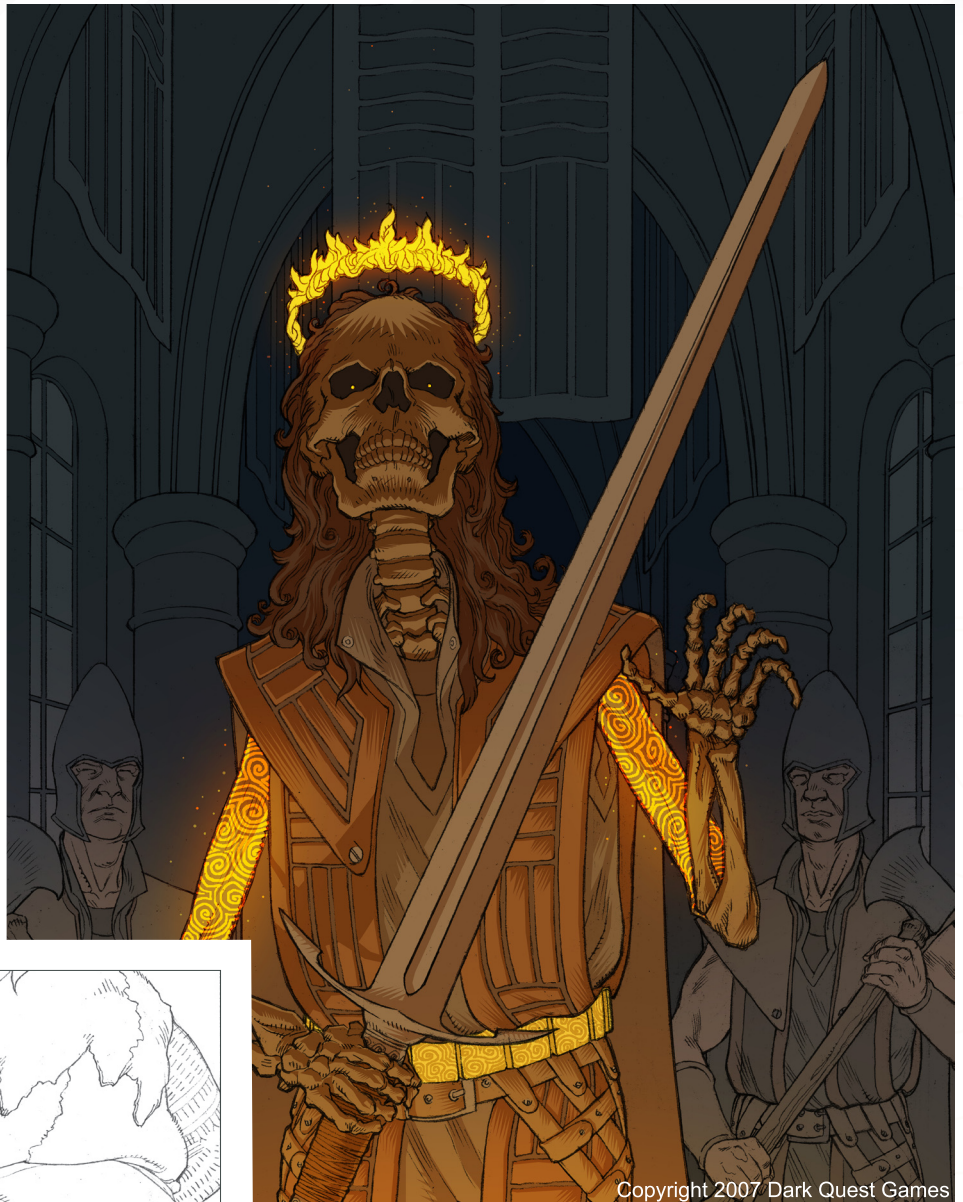
I was reading your interview on EmptyRoomStudios.com, and did a bit of research into the first comic which inspired you to become an artist: X-Force #1, by Rob Liefeld. It seems Mr. Liefeld's X-Force has had some trouble standing up to the critics! But, what was it about this comic that initially inspired you, and why?

Honestly, it wasn't really the quality of the art in the comic; rather, it was the comic itself. I hadn't had much exposure to comics before that. So seeing and reading that really left a mark on me and made me want to pursue a career in comics and illustration.

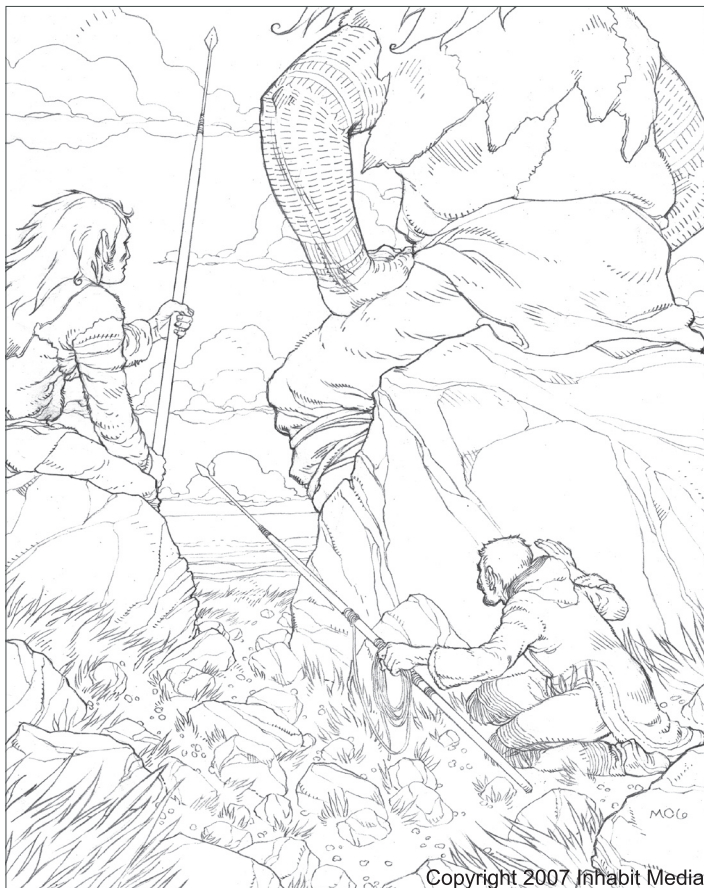
Ah, I see! How do you feel about web comics?

As a downloadable magazine we have tonnes of requests to go into print. It seems that, even in this digital age, there is still a longing to hold and feel artwork in a material form. Where do you stand on this, and how do you think the future looks for comics and magazines?

I love web comics. I think web comics are



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a great idea and could really be good if executed well. The potential audience is incredible! You could potentially reach people on the other side of the world, when before with small press comics, you would be lucky to get your work out locally.

But, I do think that there is value in the printed product. I also still love to hold the printed book in my hands. Of course, if you are extremely successful with your web comic, the potential to go to print and do well is pretty is there also.

As far as the future, I don't believe that print will ever be replaced by a digital counterpart.

Looking at your portfolio, on www.jeremymohler.com, I can see you have a fantastic eye for colour, and you obviously know how to work it to get the very best out of your imagery! At what stage do you "decide" on your

colour scheme for your latest piece, and how important is getting it right for the success of the image? Do you have any tips for artists out there who are experimenting with, and working on their understanding of, colour?

Thank you, Lynette. I always find it surprising when people comment about my colour work. I've been doing colour work professionally for a while now, but I didn't start out planning to do colour. I've always pictured myself as more of a penciller rather than a colourist.

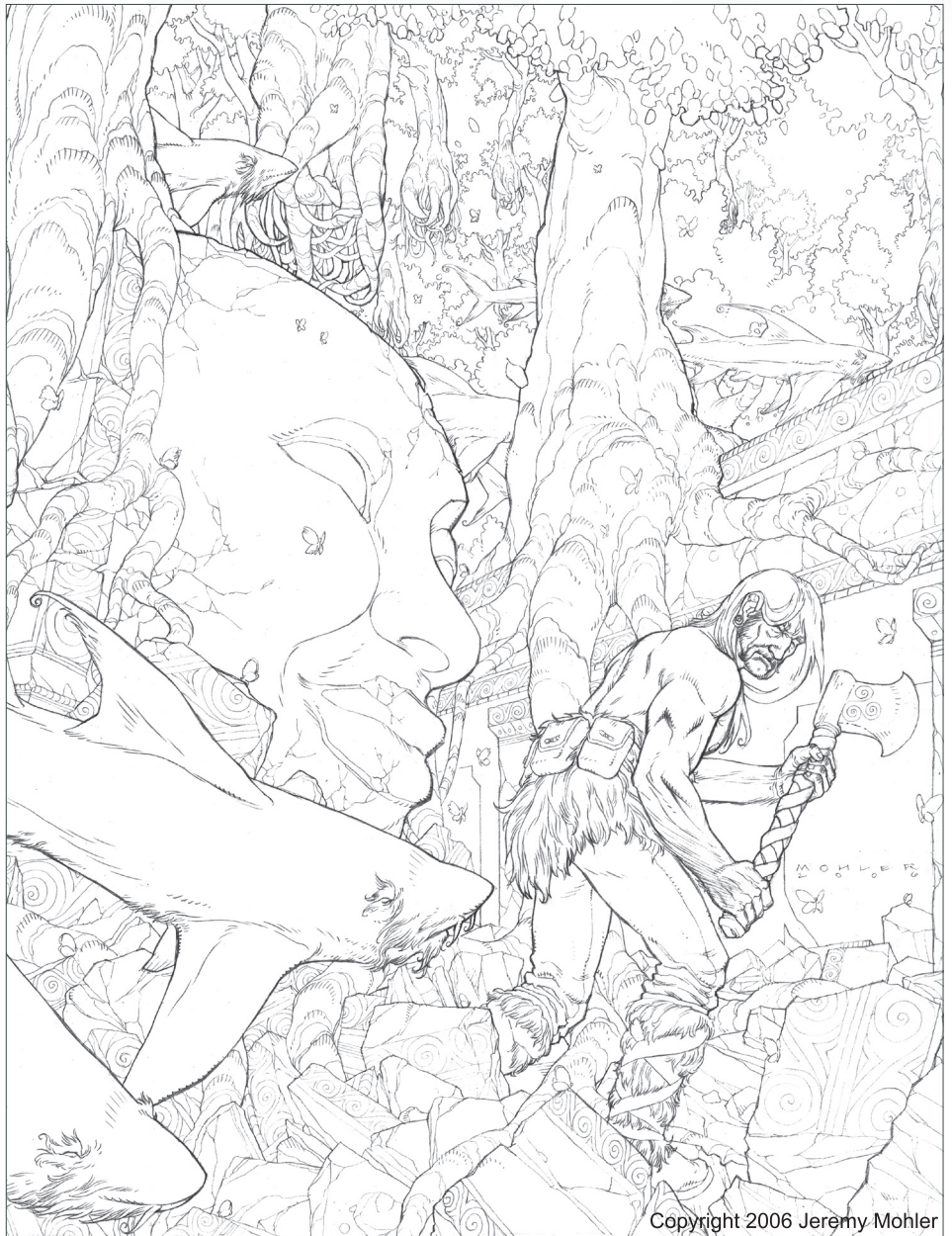
Generally, when I am working on the drawing for a piece, I have an idea of the colour scheme that comes together in my head. It usually depends on the setting, time of day, lighting, and the mood I want. And with colour, it's extremely important to get it right for the piece to be successful. Bad colours can really screw up a solid drawing.

As for tips, make sure you have a solid understand of lighting and form. It doesn't matter if you are using a fully painted style or a more cut style (like I use), if you don't have solid lighting in your piece, it's probably going to fail, or at the very least it won't carry that dramatic punch you might want it to.

Honestly though, there really is no method to the madness. I just work on the piece until I feel like the piece works or I've hit the deadline. I don't think I've ever done something the same way twice. I'm also always looking around at art from some of my favourite artists or seeing what is being done by my contemporaries for ideas on how to handle new colour schemes. And never undervalue a good critique from a friend, whether they are an artist or not.

Can you give us some examples of your favourite artists? Who do you first turn to for inspiration, when all else fails?

I look at all kinds of stuff for inspiration, movies, photos, and other artists. I actually have a rather large number of people working with me through various projects, Baeg Tobar ([http://](http://www.baegtobar.com)



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www.baegtobar.com) and Empty Room Studios (<http://www.emptyroomstudios.com>) who inspire me regularly.

As far as some of my own favourite artists, though, my all time favourite is Frank Frazetta. I also love John Cassaday (in my opinion, the best sequential artist in the business today), Cary Nord, Charles Vess, Kaluta, Barry Windsor-Smith, Alex Sheikman, and lots of European artists like Moebius, Frezzatto, Manara, Marini, and Schuiten.

Your resume shows you have been successfully working for a variety of publishers since

graduation, and you joined Empty Room Studios through a mutual sharing of plans and goals with Rick Hershey (Owner of ERS). I'm curious; what are your plans and goals exactly for your career and your future in general? What experiences from the past have influenced and informed these decisions/desires?

Honestly, I've fallen more and more in love with the idea of art directing and/or project management. I've been hip deep in the development of my own world, Baeg Tobar (<http://www.baegtobar.com>) for years now and it has been extremely rewarding creatively directing that intellectual property and working with writers and artists.



2010 10 10

I've also, recently, been hired by Platinum Studios (<http://www.platinumstudios.com>) to manage their property Cowboys and Aliens. I'll be developing it as an online world over at Drunk Duck (<http://www.drunkduck.com>), much like I've done with Baeg Tobar. It'll feature a variety of free web comics from a number of different creators. I hope to have the project online by the end of the summer.

As far as what has led me to these decisions? I've just really enjoyed working with other creatives, both writers and artists alike. It's a lot of fun to see a project come to fruition, even if I'm not the one generating the artwork for it.

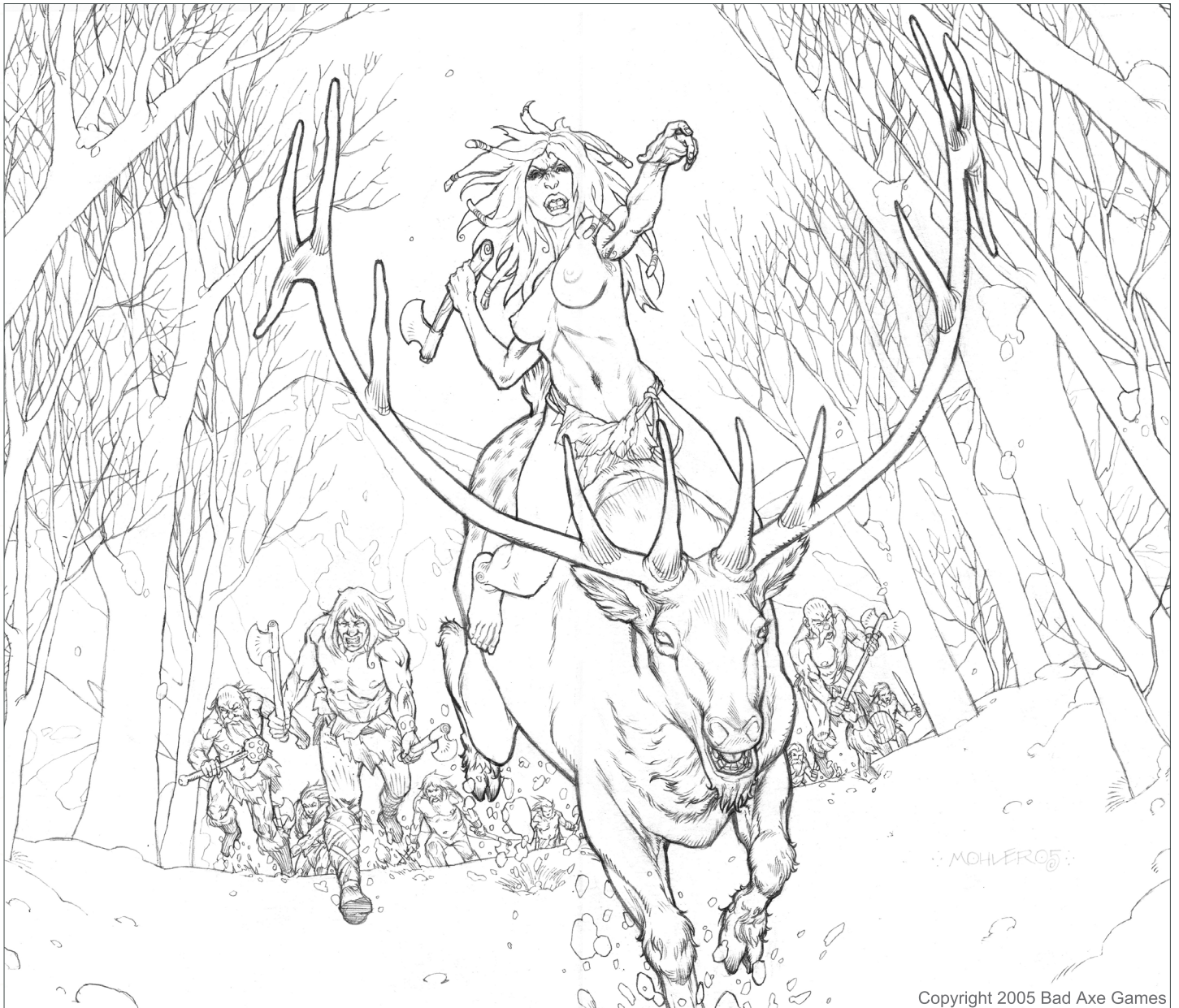
So, do you think this is going to be the direction you'll be heading in from this point? What do you think are the key characteristics and skills that an Art Director/Manager needs to succeed in this industry?

Well, I hope so. I really love project management and development. Almost more than creating art myself. I love working with people.

Well, I think you need to know how to manage a project from concept to final – and that's not easy. I've learned a lot about that with Baeg Tobar and if I were to do this all over again, I would do a lot of things different. Not only that,

but you have to be able to motivate the people working on the project with you and make sure that work is, indeed, being completed and on time. It also helps to be an artist yourself, so that you have some insight into the process of creation. I've worked with some Art Directors in the past that have absolutely no clue. You also need to be easily approachable, so if there is a problem, the creator isn't afraid to come to you and talk it over, rather than handing in sub-par work.

Your pencil drawings on your portfolio are very beautifully done, and although they are not living in colour, the effect that you create with your



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pencil alone certainly brings shape, form and life to them. Do you always start your 2D computer artwork with a traditional pencil line drawing, and if so, what benefits does the pencil have for you that a tablet simply can't provide?

Thanks! I've always felt that my drawings were the strongest part of my illustrations. And yeah, I pretty much exclusively start with a pencil line drawing. Personally, I like the tactile feel of the pencil/erasure to paper. Plus, I love having a solid, finished piece of artwork that isn't digital.

As far as working on a tablet, I've always had trouble getting a smooth line with it, and perhaps that's something I could figure out with enough practice, but again, I prefer the feel of working with pencil on paper.

Ah, so you haven't abandoned your roots just yet! Do you think the time will ever come where you will work exclusively on the computer? It seems that more and more artists today, for time's sake, are leaving the traditions of the pencil and paper behind. Is this the fate of the HB?

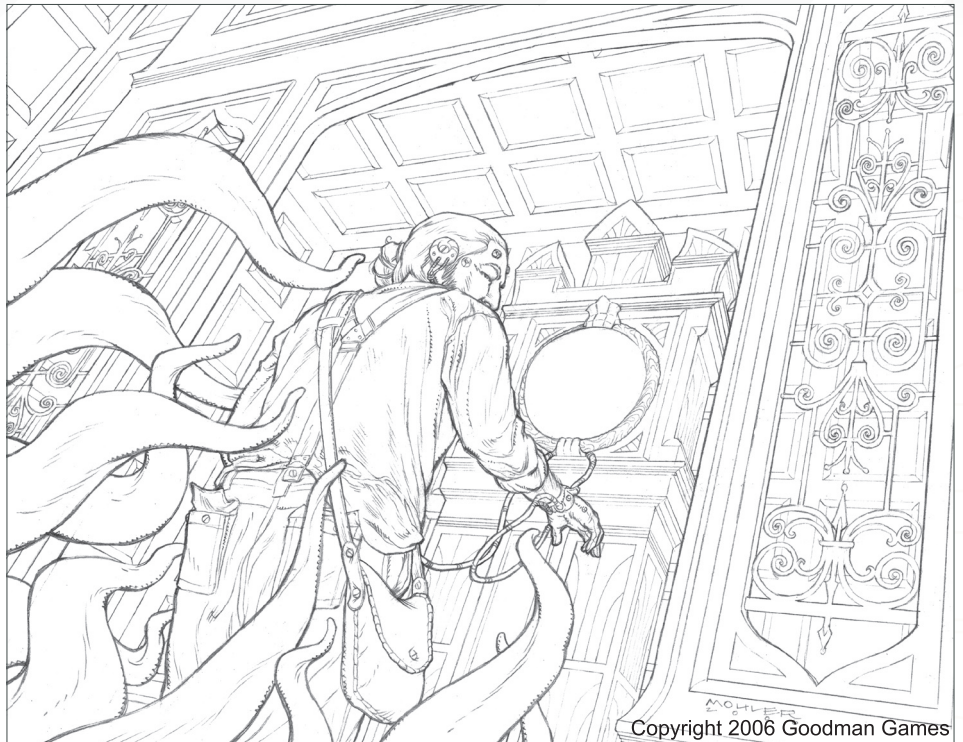
I doubt it. I am pretty confident in saying I'll never stop using paper. I just like it too much. And there will always be people who use traditional materials. We can't forget about all the fine artists out there.

Finally; any advice for those out there looking to get into comic/game art, and perhaps are, like you once were, feeling frustrated by their current situation and need a change of pace?

Well, I would recommend that if you want to do comics, figure out a way to get to the JKS. Even if you can only go for one year, it'll make a world of difference. Or, if you can't, then figure out a way to spend as much time as possible every day drawing, drawing and drawing. Just doing it is what will make all the difference.

And with the internet these days, it is a lot easier to get your portfolio in front of Art Directors.

Make sure you submit your portfolio and continue to submit your portfolio to as many



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different people as you can. And just because you get a job, don't stop submitting! If you want to freelance, you have to be tenacious. Nobody is going to do the work for you!

Thanks for talking to us. I wish you the best for your future projects and career – whichever directions you choose to follow.

Thanks Lynette! I appreciate your time very much.

Jeremy Mohler

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.emptyroomstudios.com/j_mohler.php

Or contact them at:

j Jeremy@emptyroomstudios.com

Interviewed by: Lynette Clee

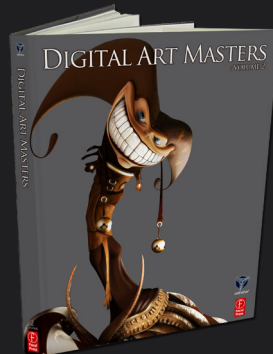
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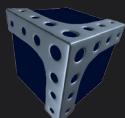
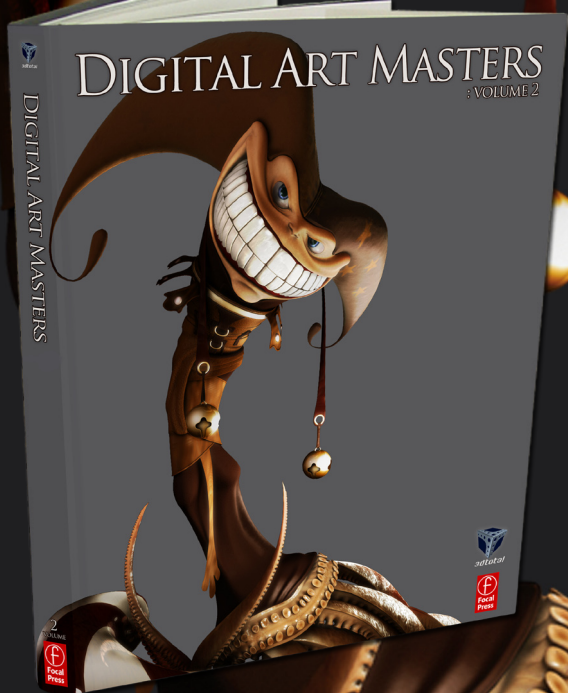
FEATURES 58 OF THE FINEST DIGITAL
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THE INDUSTRY TODAY, FROM THE
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*"...It's what impels you
to go further; realising
it's high time to take the
bull by the horns again,
since there's so much
improvement to be done in
this technical field."*

Mathieu Fussler

Our latest interviewee works through the night, devoting the small hours to his wonderful creations. We ask Ani what fuels and inspires him and, on a lighter note, we find out just what his hand would do if it had a mind of it's own...



Leys Mathieu SSENNE

Hi Ani, are you a freelancer or are you employed? What does a typical day in France involve for you?

Hello. I've been a freelancer since 2002. I first worked for Lankhor, developing video games for PC and Playstation, then, when the company closed down, I became a freelancer in order to become a full-time Illustrator. A typical day begins about 2 o'clock in the afternoon; I shoot myself with café-pizza, and I draw, draw, and draw - from time to time my mouse skids on the Diablo2 icon (quite compatible with Painter 9; you'd better think about recording the current drawing before skidding though!), or when my finger pushes the Gamecube pad. In the evening, I socialise a little, before going back to work and diving finally, around 6 o'clock in the morning, into a well-deserved coma!

It sounds like you are becoming nocturnal! Do you find you work better during the very late hours?

It's true, I tend to live more and more at night now. I don't really know why... Probably because it's quieter for drawing; there are fewer temptations from outside, and I feel that the ideas come more easily to me.

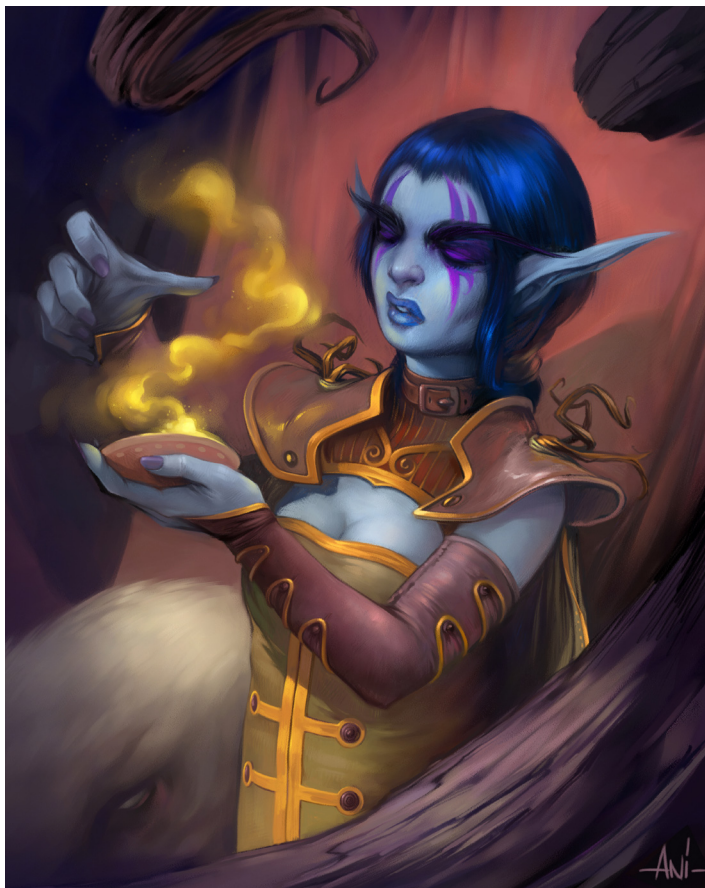
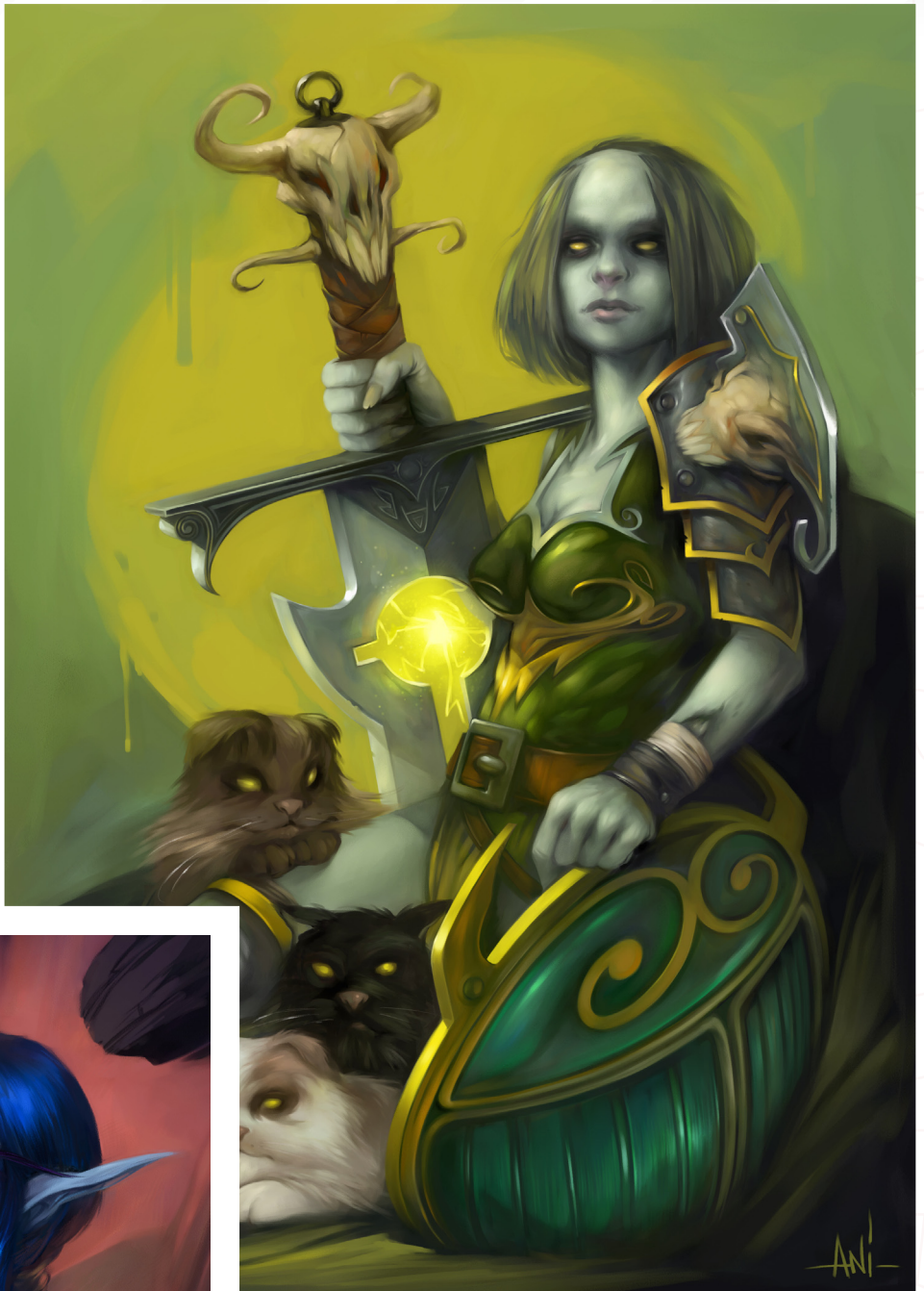


You seem to have developed a great style of your own. Has this come naturally to you over the years?

I don't really know if I've developed a style of my own, yet. Nevertheless, I think that it came over the years, from various orders and personal projects. I think I've learnt a lot simply by observing what's around me and the work of others. I spend quite a lot of time on the Internet, wandering about the forums devoted to CG, being astounded by the images that I see. It's what impels you to go further; realising it's high time to take the bull by the horns again, since there's so much improvement to be done in this technical field.

Yes it's amazing how much you can learn just by surfing around online. Which are your favourite sites?

I most often spend time on the forums, which gives the opportunity to see new and varied things every time the page refreshes. The forum I visit most frequently is that of Café Salé (www.cfsi.net), because it has the huge advantage of



being French-speaking, and because a lot of talented people go there. I also frequently visit the forum of ConceptArt.org - there's always a lot of marvellous things to discover there. I don't participate in it though because of the language which is a slight problem for me. Sometimes I go on Eatpoo too, again for the quality of the works on display. Besides that, I visit a lot of personal websites and blogs by switching from link to link.

One of your specialities seems to be cute, stylised animals. Why is this and what do you like best about creating these?

Originally, it came mostly from the orders I received. I had to draw a series of animals for two different games and other separate illustrations, at the same time. So, for a period of time it felt like I was drawing nothing but



Ami





animals! The subject is really fun though, and luckily they left me free to make my own graphic choices for the games, and so I enjoyed myself a lot. I really enjoyed humanising them... Anyway, I try not to concentrate only on this subject these days. It's true that they tend to ask me to work more and more on this theme, but I feel personally like working on various subjects and exploring new and different paths. Not because I feel I have explored everything about this subject, or that the cute stylised animals have no longer any secrets left for me, but because I would hate feeling as though I was always doing the same thing. I think I need to give a rest to all these animals, but I'll be happy to go back to them in some time with a new look and perhaps a different graphical approach to the subject.



Ami

You seem to be able to capture expressions and emotions very well in your characters. Can you give the readers some tips on how you achieve this and which parts of the characters you concentrate on to bring out the emotions?

I firstly try to work on the whole aspect of the character. This global aspect will express the emotion, and at the same time I work on the gaze, and perhaps a squeeze of the mouth... there must be a global coherence. Then I get into the details of a particular part of the body. I try to get as close as possible to the reality of a particular element.

From your online portfolio, we can see you have tried your hand at 3D art, too. Can you combine 3D with your illustration work, or do you do 3D just for fun?



3D art was my first passion. I discovered it when I was at secondary school, when I realised immediately that I wanted to make it my job. In the end, my art studies did not make it possible for me to practice 3D, and so I had to teach myself using 3D Studio 3 version Dos (it wasn't Max at that time and is a bit old-fashioned now). I finally got away from it all by learning to draw, although I still did it a little during my first job as a Graphic Artist at Lankhor. However, I quickly put all this away when I went freelance. Today, I use 3D only very exceptionally to help me with the perspective for example, because it's much easier to move blocks and change the angle of perspective, and to have an idea of what it could be like, before drawing the real thing. However, I have started to get interested in it again - the possibilities offered by software such as Mudbox and ZBrush make me feel like getting back into it. They leave much more room for the drawing, and are a sort of mix between 2D and 3D, which I really like.





As one last - and funny - question; if your hand became disconnected from your brain and grew a mind of its own, what do you think it would do?

It would go on holiday!

Mathieu Leyssenne

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.aniii.com

or contact them at


ani@aniii.com

Interviewed by: Tom Greenway



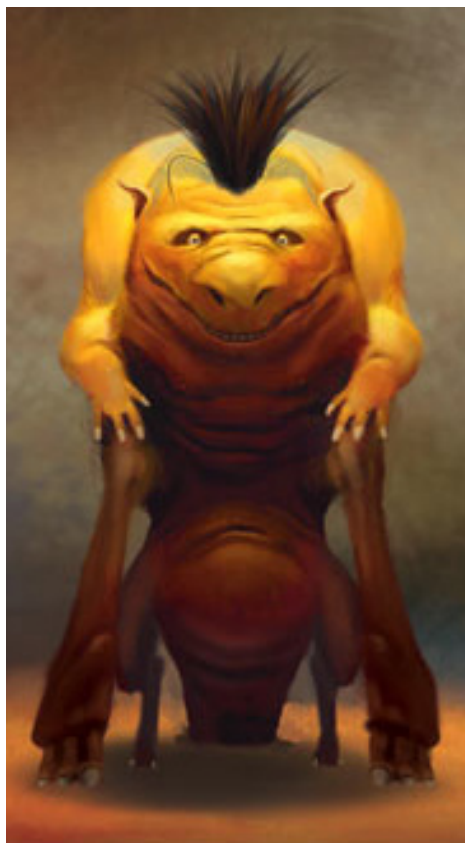
derick tsai

Derick Tsai is a man with many talents, whose portfolio includes storyboarding, animatics, concept art and illustration. Having been a freelance artist for many years, along with a position at a notable games studio as a Storyboard and Animatics Artist, he has now branched out to form his own, independent design studio...



"I personally like variety and think each project has an intrinsic look that it wants to be. It's the challenge of the artist to find that look and execute it to the best of his or her ability."

DERICK TSai



You have worked as a Storyboard and Animatics Artist at High Moon Studios, but for anyone who is unfamiliar with these terms could you please explain what these titles mean and what your job requires of you, exactly?

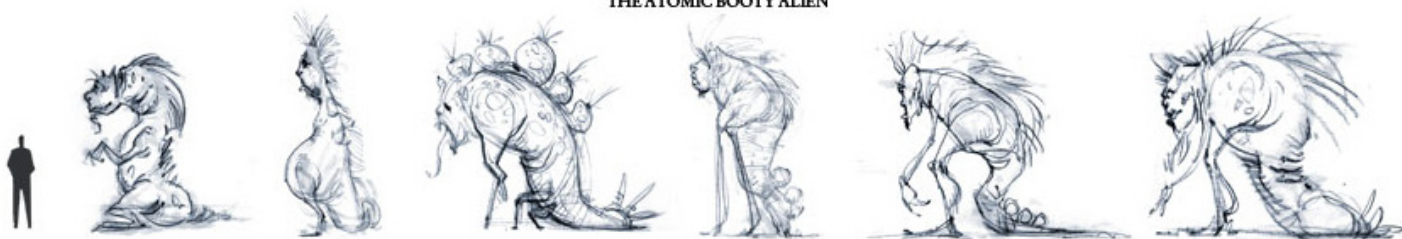
I recently left my job at High Moon Studios to pursue my own personal ventures, but I would still love to share my experiences there with you and your readers. A Storyboard Artist creates a series of illustrations or frames for the purpose of previsualizing a sequence of some kind. We start by reading the script or a treatment and draw out each dramatic beat. Storyboard Artists need to have great command of film language, the camera, figure drawing, editing and pacing. One doesn't need to be the world's most accomplished draftsman, it's more about drawings that communicate efficiently and quickly. A Storyboard Artist is basically the actor and the camera-man all in one; you are depicting actors in action and deciding how it's going to be staged cinematically. I felt the job was excellent training for directing, which is something I hope to get into in the near future.

An animatic is essentially an animated storyboard, which contains all the storybeats, pacing and action. It is absolutely invaluable to the development of a sequence. Our animatics at High Moon were given to the 3D artists/animators to use as a template for the sequence. I create all my boards in Adobe Photoshop and draw on a Cintiq, which is a huge screen that you can directly draw on. I then edit and animate the storyboards using After Effects and Final Cut Pro.

Did you have to undertake any training in film-making in order to gain an insight into the language of film? If not, what has prepared you for working as a storyboard artist? Can you describe some of your favourite film sequences and explain why they have stood out to you? With regards to your question about training, a lot of it comes from just being a life-long lover of the movies. I watch tonnes of movies and, after a while, you start to get a sense of what works for you visually and what doesn't. Whilst at the UCLA, I took several film criticism and



SKAT THE ATOMIC BOOTY ALIEN



production courses which really honed my sense of taste, as well as sharpened my craft in terms of staging, lighting and editing. After the UCLA, I worked in the motion graphics field from several years which allowed me to practice everything I had learned in school. It was a great field to be involved in because it was so multi-disciplinary; you had to be skilled in terms of graphic design, illustration, editing and video production. In terms of favourite film sequences, any of the boxing sequences in *Raging Bull* are incredible examples of the use of editing and sound to create an absolutely brutal experience. I just loved the use of slow motion contrasted with the brutal punches in real time as well as the complexly layered soundtrack. Believe it or not, I liked the "Show me the money!" sequence in *Jerry Maguire*, because it was a very humorous way to show someone who's an absolute control freak completely unravel. Hmmm, what else...? Well, anytime where Vince Vaughn is allowed to ramble on camera is usually pretty special in some bizarre way - the



guy is a complete loon! I love how he seems to make perfect sense to himself, but the others in the scene are a mix of being frightened, bewildered or amused. As for more recent movies, I thought *Children of Men* was really special. I loved how the film used long takes and complex choreography to portray the action - it really draws the audience in because they can

see things unfold in real time.

Tell us a little about *Shrap Wars* and the *Misfits* and the ideas behind the images?

Shrap Wars was created as a result of my obsession with junk and context. I always liked junk and scrap because they were discarded pieces from another object or another "narrative"





SHRAP WARS

ROUND 01 // MONKEYSTEIN RULES



of some kind. And when they are thrown or collaged together, these random pieces that are "out of context" become reconstituted into something original that would have been impossible in their previous state. The world I created was set in the future where much of the world has become a gigantic landfill, and societies and tribes have sprung up around different piles of trash. Property and power is acquired by using giant robots created out of garbage and shrapnel. This is a world I really enjoyed creating and would like to create more pieces for in the future which have a balance of sci-fi and humour, that I really enjoy.

Misfits is about kids who just don't belong. Each of the characters have some kind of visual quirk that represents a core personality trait or an insecurity of some kind. I wanted to create characters that are relatable and appealing, as most of us have been self conscious about some physical or personality attribute in our lives and have learned to work through it. I also thought it'd be fun to create these silhouettes that communicated the personality of the character immediately.

Where would you eventually like to take these two themes?

Hmmm... I would love to see Shrap Wars become a film; I can see it as a cross between City of Lost Children crossed with Dark Crystal. As for Misfits, I was actually in talks with a publisher a while back about making it into a children's book, but unfortunately it didn't work out. As part of my pitch package I wrote up bios for all the characters and created a short story with one of the characters. I envisioned all the characters living in the same town and their lives all interlocking in some way - sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly ala Crash or Magnolia. This is definitely one of my favourite

projects because I am fascinated by human imperfections and quirks.

You appear to have a good cross-section of work on your website, ranging from graphics and stylised cartoon treatment through to a more sober and realistic look. Whilst some artists appear to have a definitive style and a look which remains constant, your work appears more varied. What are your thoughts on this and the resultant approach you take to your subject matter?

That's a great question! I personally like variety and think each project has an intrinsic look that

it wants to be. It's the challenge of the artist to find that look and execute it to the best of his or her ability. For example, Shrap Wars is definitely meant to be fanciful and whimsical; it's got a touch of Gilliam with some Tim Burton thrown in there. If I desaturated it, or made it darker and more menacing, it suddenly becomes a 9 Inch Nails video. I don't really have a specific style, nor do I really want one. I believe in versatility, conceptual abilities and creative problem-solving. I personally like tackling different mediums, industries and subject matter without any preconceptions of what it could be or look like until I start problem-solving. All disciplines

and styles are related by the same basic principles of good design, by being facile at one I feel as if I'm indirectly developing my aptitude for another. For example, I feel like getting great at a particular editing style can somehow help me create brushstrokes at the same time.

What do you regard as the "basic principals of good design?

I think "good design" is something that is appropriate for the context. For example, say there's an image of someone who is lit extremely harshly, full frontal. There are basically no shadows and no definition of any kind and it's completely washed out. By any basic standards, I guess you can say it's not a great image, but what if it was preceded by shots of the subject running and a helicopter shining a blinding searchlight on him? Suddenly, that image is extremely compelling and becomes an example of a well-designed image.



misfits



Melvin



Rufus



Zack



Quentin



Your website demonstrates an aptitude towards drawing characters and environments as well as vehicles and mechanical structures.

Do you enjoy all equally, and what do you find the most challenging?

Hmmm... Every discipline you mentioned has their own unique set of challenges and I enjoy them all. Doing characters is great because it really is about bringing a being to life, building an individual from scratch, stroke by stroke. Vehicles are interesting because it's about trying to imbue something inanimate with a certain attitude and personality. I studied Transportation Design at the Art Center College of Design and I feel like, in some ways, it is the most complex discipline I ever tried my hand at.

However, I would say the most challenging discipline is storyboarding. From a sheer technical level, you need to have the ability to draw everything and anything, from any angle, with any lighting, on the spot, and in perspective! The shots all have to line up in continuity and each sketch must communicate efficiently and clearly. A lot of concept design is about "what does it look like?", in terms of anatomy, textures, details, materials and so on.

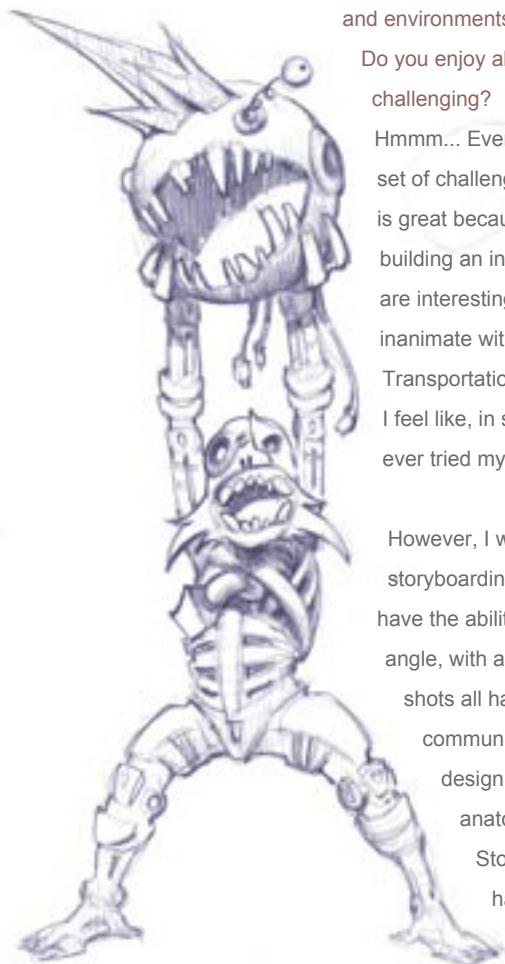
Storyboarding is about "what's happening?", and it had better be really engaging because there's not much fancy technique to hide behind. If people

don't like the way it feels, or if your action doesn't play well, or if the jokes aren't hitting, then it's back to the drawing board!

You have worked full-time at a games studio for over a year, but what is it that you most enjoyed about that job and what challenges did it present when compared to being freelance?

The best part about working at a company was the great people I got to work with from different disciplines. It was pretty awesome being able to walk around the studio and see what the 3D artists and sound technicians were up to. If you had a remote interest in anything, chances were that someone in the studio was good at it and could show you something. I'd say the biggest challenge was doing essentially the same things every day. I loved doing boards, but after a while I really wanted to do different things.

The best thing about freelance is the variety of projects you get to tackle. Recently, I did promotional work for City of Heroes, worked on a Japanese Redbull pitch, helped design the new Canadian Gatorade campaign, as well



"NOMADS OF EL NAFID"

SAKHIR



as Modest Mouse's new music video, "Dashboard". I try to look for work across different mediums and genres to keep myself fresh and excited. I actually recently started my own independent design studio, and so far it has been an incredible experience. We are currently handling Obsidian's next-gen project, designing the concepts, user interface, storyboards and animatics, which has been really exciting.

Could you tell us about your studio and team and the ethics behind the formation of the company?

My vision for the company is to be a multi-disciplinary design studio. I have a broad range of interests and have worked in a variety of industries, and that is something I would like to continue to do on a much larger level. This current job with Obsidian is a prime example of being multi-disciplinary; it currently involves aspects of motion graphics, storyboards, animatics and concept art. Having worked in all those different disciplines I feel like I am able to provide strong art direction to my team as well as interface well with clients to figure out how best I can best serve their needs.



The team is currently made up of freelancers that I can call up on a project by project basis, and I am fortunate to have made great contacts with some incredibly talented people over the years and working with them is a privilege. I'm also on the lookout for new artists all the time, and look for the opportunity to work with them on the right project.

We are primarily a design service right now, but in the near future I'd like to branch out into content, starting with web comics and eventually moving into directing short films.

And finally, being from a design background you are adept at exploring a concept and producing variations on a theme, and your website suggests your ideas are part of a narrative. Is this the case, and if so have you ever had an interest in taking your concepts and developing them in 3D at all?

I explore my concepts in 3D, just not necessarily on the computer. The Shrap Wars pieces actually started as abstract amalgamations of clay and armature wire, digitally photographed on pieces of foam core with grids drawn on them for perspective. I then took the photos into Photoshop and began to layer on the paint and added details and textures until I had something I really liked. I am also currently experimenting with Poser and Sketchup to create a more efficient pipeline for storyboards and concept art.

Thanks for taking the time to talk to us, Derick.

Thanks for the time; I had a great time chatting with you guys! I hope your readers enjoy the article and please check back to the website for updates! Thanks!

Derick Tsai

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.dericktsai.com

Or contact them at:

derick@dericktsai.com

Interviewed by: Richard Tilbury





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Brenton Cottman

Brenton Cottman is a digital matte painter who has recently worked on the major CG blockbuster, Transformers. He began life in Rhode Island from where he eventually moved on to study traditional painting in New York, before moving to the mecca of the film industry, Los Angeles...

"Learning to paint is really just learning to observe and interpret. Your lack of understanding is glaringly obvious with every mistake on the canvas. Your ability to be critical of your own work directly influences how you improve..."



Cottman

Brenton Cottman

Could you tell us a little about how you got into matte painting and established yourself in the film industry?

This could be long winded... Well, my original goal was to be an illustrator; book covers, comic books and such. I chose to study at SVA because the students' work at the time was exceptional in the way of representational painting. The work was coming out of a corner of the illustration department that focused on academic realism, specifically traditional figurative painting. It was basically three or four artists running six hour drawing and painting sessions out of two studios on the top floor. I basically spent the next three years in those two rooms. It was great. Senior year, a friend pointed me to some paintings that were being done digitally, I think they were for the *Spirits Within*. I had always been interested in visual effects but was surprised that painters were still being used in a CG centric VFX pipeline. My last semester, I squeezed into a night course in computer graphics that got me up and running with the basics. I found some work at a couple of small game developers over the



next year, and worked late night on personal matte painting projects. I got a group of friends together one weekend, shot a bunch of footage on DV, and then worked from it for the next year. I learned to roto, model, texture, light, and composite through those projects. Most were complete crap of course. I went to Siggraph and

got some very helpful feedback and a couple of great interviews. With that bit of encouragement I went back to refining my reel and decided to move to LA. Five months later, we drove across country, arrived in LA in February, and with the help of some people I met at Siggraph I was working in March.



Do you feel rotoscoping, compositing, modelling and texturing are important assets for a matte artist, and if so can you describe their importance to your line of work?

Well it's good to have some understanding of what is involved with each part of the pipeline, and everything you pick up adds to your skill set. You can roughly light and texture geometry and render it out as a basis for a painting. If you're setting up your own projections you need to be able to model, set up cameras, and such. It's also good to be able to set up rough composites of your painting for walkthroughs, as well.

Which have been your favourite projects to date?

Well, hopefully I can always say the most recent. Transformers has been really great and we are just in the process of finishing that now.

Transformers looks loaded with effects shots but what has been the most challenging part of the project for you?

I can't really go into the specifics of any of the shots, but there was a variety of work ranging from painting out elements of a plate and

extending set pieces, to creating concepts, backdrops and establishing shots. Most of the shots had camera movement and so usually involved setting up camera projections and modelling a bit of geometry to project onto.

How important do you feel your traditional training has been in view of your matte work?

It's been really invaluable and I couldn't overstate it. Learning to paint is really just learning to observe and interpret. Your lack of understanding is glaringly obvious with every mistake on the canvas. Your ability to be critical of your own work directly influences how you improve. There are none of the fallbacks that you get digitally. It takes a very long time to develop these skills to a decent level and there are really no short cuts. I really can't imagine working without that foundation. The reality of a lot of matte painting work doesn't really demand that artists have this background. But I think people who jump directly into the digital and photo manipulation aspect of it really miss the opportunity to develop the confidence in image making fundamentals.







Do you like to explore similar subjects in your matte work as you do with traditional painting? If not, why?

I don't know. I sort of treat them separately. Working traditionally I'm most interested in working from life. I suppose it's a combination of exercise and documentation.

Could you describe the different approach in producing a matte painting which can be projected onto geometry, compared to a still shot?

There isn't really much of a difference between the two. Most shots have camera movement of some sort and it's really just a matter of determining the degree of parallax that will be apparent as the shot progresses, and creating

a composition that works throughout. Setting up the actual 3D projection is relatively simple: break up a painting, model geometry based on the painting, project it through the camera, and clean up any artifacts. Maybe add a spec or reflection pass. It's pretty well documented. The difficulty is in having a process that works for shot production. Refining the look and composition of the painting and getting buyoff on a concept before you've put days or weeks into it. Getting the painting to move in 3D can be relatively simple if you can move forward confidently knowing the client has approved the 2D painting. If you approach it in reverse and your primary concern is 3D layout, you often over think things and get buyoff on an unrefined concept, or sometimes even a grey shaded

model. It can then be quite laborious to go through the revision process.

What do you think are the main skill sets that differentiate good matte artists and good digital painters?

Matte painting pertains to shot production specifically. So ideally a matte artist would have a strong understanding of the technical and logistical aspects of the production process and how to solve problems within it without creating other problems by doing so. Of course, if you aren't a strong painter to start with that will cause problems alone. But in general, digital painters can focus on the aesthetic without being concerned with how they fit within a pipeline.





You mention digital painting focusing on the aesthetic and not needing to be concerned with a pipeline. Does this imply that matte work needs to preserve numerous layers and components that can be tweaked and changed to suit the pipeline, and even altered if the mood of shot descriptions change slightly?

Well, that's part of working with a compositor and providing him with the elements he needs. But there are issues with colour space, resolutions, tracking, translating assets through different packages, motion blur - basically everything involved with taking the work from the integration team, through painting, and providing it to compositing without slipping up along the way.

Which are your favourite matte paintings and what do you feel makes them so successful? I can't really say much for my own paintings as I mostly see flaws, but in general, good images have strong foundations. If you can start with a good composition and value structure, everything builds from there and usually falls into place. Of course, a bad idea is a bad idea regardless of how well painted it is. I usually spend a lot of time just researching and revising concepts. Matte painting is sort of different in that you are usually dealing with footage that has been composed to a degree already, the idea is predetermined, and the values range is sort of established. It's supporting the plate so ideally you can layout the values and composition in a way that strengthens what was shot.

What would you advise people do if they are keen to become matte artists, and what type of work do you require to get into the industry?

Well, in addition to getting a strong education and developing a solid portfolio, just stay passionate about your work and be prepared and open to opportunities when they come up. There are plenty of reasons not to get hired, so doing your best to keep the list short will help.

Brenton Cottman

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.brentoncottman.com

Or contact them at:

Brenton@brentoncottman.com

Interviewed by: Richard Tilbury

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Chapter 5: Modeling of the Accessories
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Chapter 6: UVW Mapping
- Sword, Clothing, Armour & Body

Chapter 7: Texturing & Hair
- Eyes, Skin & Hair

Chapter 8: Bones & Skinning
- Bases, Hierarchy & Skinning


Introduction:
Michel Roger's famous 'Joan of Arc' tutorial re-written for Maya by Taylor Kingston, Cinema 4D by Giuseppe Guglielmucci & Nikki Bartucci, Lightwave by Vojislav Milanovich and Softimage by Luciano Iurino and 3DCreative Magazine.com.

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"We always try to get projects that present new challenges for us. We'd really hate to end up being known as a studio that only does this or that."

Imaginary Friends Studios

This is an Interview with Edmund, Studio Head at Imaginary Friends Studios, Singapore. Formed in late 2005, Imaginary Friends Studios was created to be an independent, all-terrain art department to serve the creative needs of companies and studios in the entertainment industry, namely comics, games and television/film...

Imaginary Friends Studios

Since opening their doors, IFS has created a substantial volume of work for international clients which include Electronic Arts, DC Comics, MTV and diverse properties including Warhammer, Street Fighter, F.E.A.R., Superman and Spiderman, and many others. Their two physical studios based in Singapore and Jakarta are equipped with high-speed broadband, all the major game consoles, and a reference library of books and media and toys up the wazoo. All of these go to creating a studio environment like no other we know (and love)! With a combination of talent and a professional work ethic, IFS has developed a reputation for being dependable, professional and for delivering nothing less than quality work. 2DArtist Magazine interviewed Edmund, one of the four founders and the Studio Head for IFS, back in our very first issue! Eighteen months on, we catch up for another chat...

So, how are things going, Ed? It's been a little while...

Things are going good. We just got our first batch of the new art book sent from our publisher and it feels really good.

It's very exciting waiting for your own book to arrive isn't it? Does it contain your art from the last 12 months?

Actually it's more like 24 months worth with samples of all the best bits. Our first art book was like a personal portfolio from our team of artists, but this new one is that PLUS work



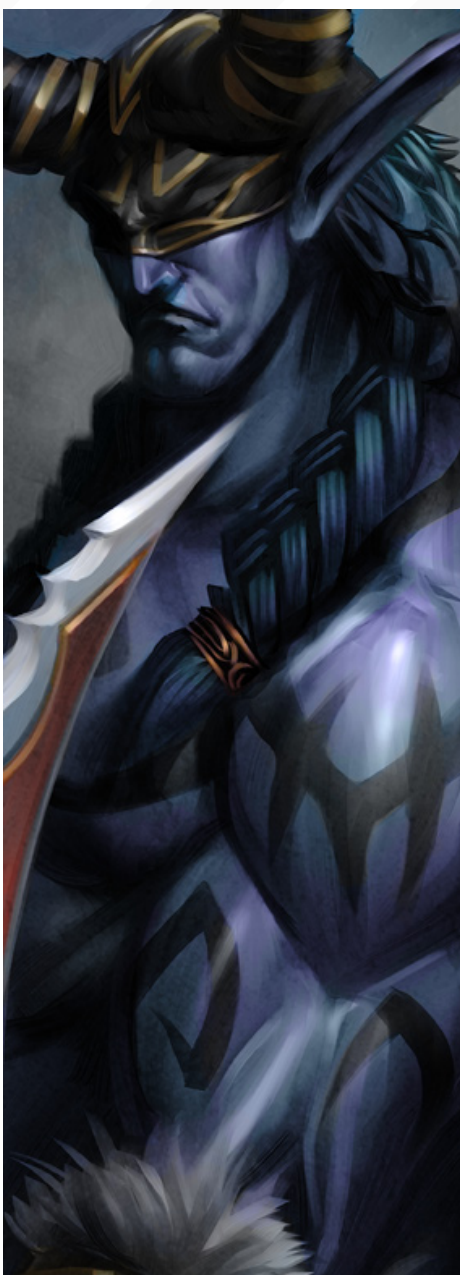
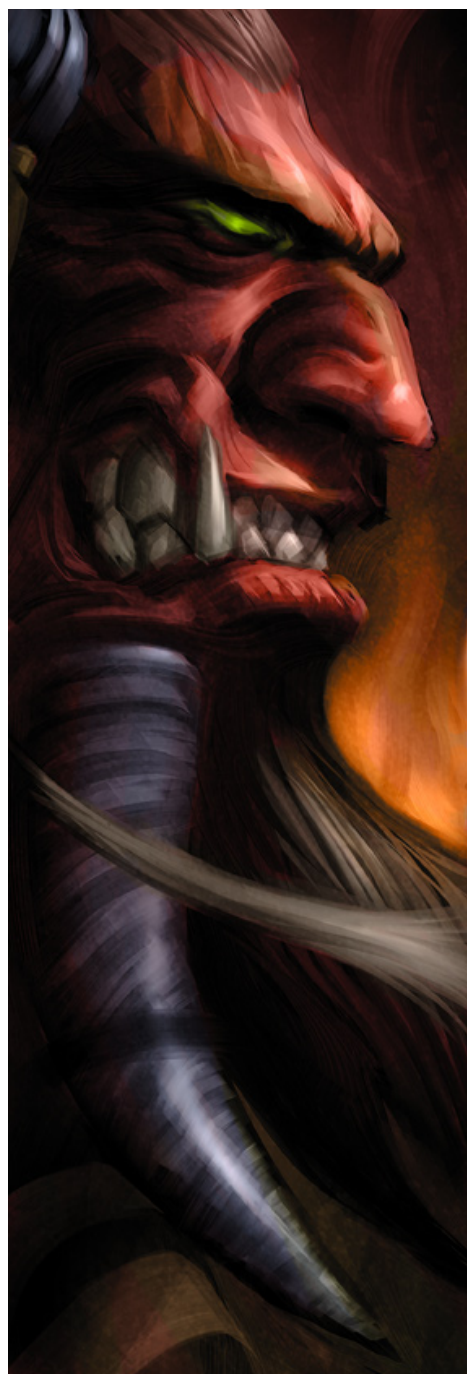
we've done together as a studio, and it's twice the page count!!

Wow! So is this going to serve both purposes of bringing in revenue from sales and as a portfolio to send out?

Well, the portfolio is meant to bring in revenue too!

Yeah, of course. Is it a good technique for bringing in business?

Well for us currently it's the only real way



because we're located all the way in sunny Singapore, so attending conventions etc. is really expensive and we can only afford to do it once a year, but it's not a cheap way either.

I hear exposure in high class magazines is very good too?!

Sure thing!

I will see if I can put you in touch with some, then, ha ha!

Yeah, well one of the reasons why we do it is because it also keeps us close to our roots. By publishing ourselves we go through a lot of the

same issues our clients go through, so in a way it helps us to keep things in perspective.

How is the flow of work going? New clients all the time, or continual work from your core ones? Both actually. It's nice that our core clients still have projects for us, but we're really happy that there's also a steady flow of clients with different kinds of projects. We always try to get projects that present new challenges for us. We'd really hate to end up being known as a studio that only does this or that.





So what is the most diverse project that you have to date?

Well lately we've been commissioned to do designs for tabletop miniatures for games, such as Heroclix and Horrorclix, and a big fantasy property which I can't name right now.

So this project involves designing the characters keeping in mind they have to be sculpted afterwards? Is that restrictive?

At first we thought it could be a major consideration, but after doing more research and seeing their current products, we were pleasantly surprised to see the detailed sculpting and production values that go into these minis. We've seen some sculptures of our designs and the stuff is amazing!

Well it's been almost 18 months since our first interview with you, which we were proud to have in the launch issue. What have been the main changes at IFS since then?





Well, we moved into a bigger studio - twice the size of our first! In fact, both our Singapore and Indonesian studios moved into larger premises - that's a big step and certainly cost us a lot! We're actually really, really trying hard not to become a big studio though, but we keep meeting these GREAT artists and just keep on growing!

Sounds very impressive! We would like to see some shots of your new studio if possible; is it how I imagine with cool art on the walls and toys and games machines everywhere?

Ha ha, yeah, it's probably the most unproductive environment by most business standards, as you can imagine.

Sounds like a lot of fun! You mention meeting more great artists. Are these people joining your freelance or in-house team?

As of this year, we've seen a few new faces join us from the region; two from Kuala Lumpur and

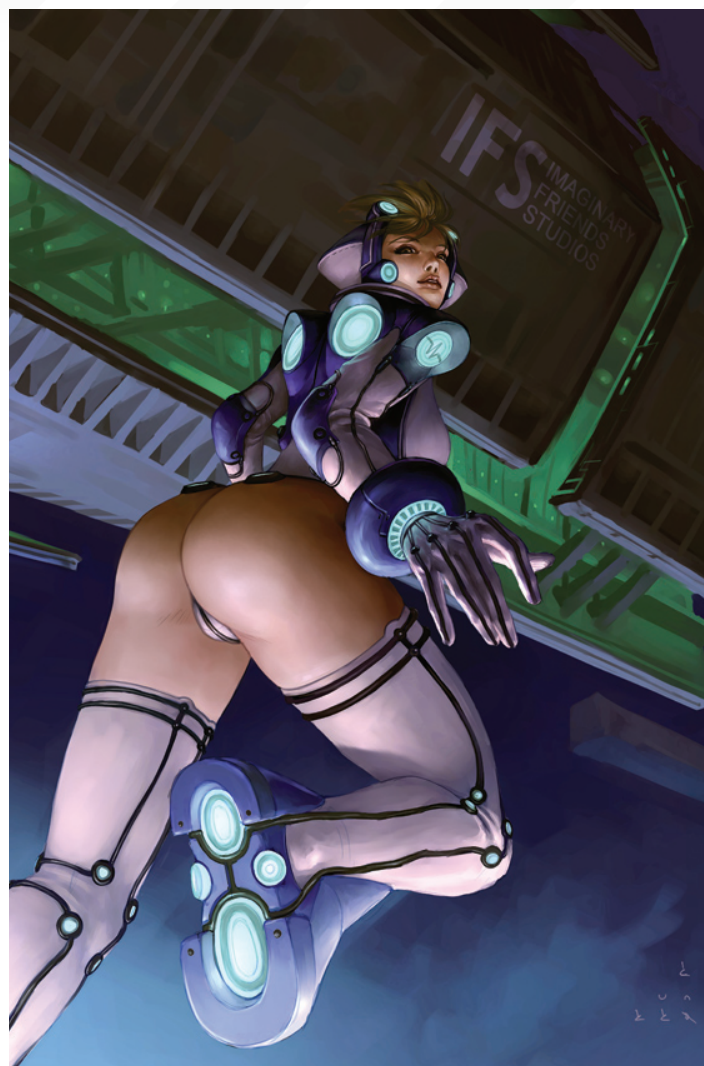
one from Manila. There are just so many great artists in the region writing in that sometimes it's hard to say no. We also have some artists working with us remotely on staff. For example, Svetlin joined us all the way from Bulgaria. In the same way that the Internet has opened up opportunities for us to work with an international market, we're also beginning to see how we can do the same for the international artists. Nothing beats working in a physical studio however, but who knows, maybe IFS Bulgaria could be the next big frontier?

And as the Managing Director, Ed, do you still get chance to be creative or, like me, are you now lost in emails and management?

Every day I think the next day will be better. But I think it's more of a personal discipline issue. I might just need someone to kick my butt more! After all, we now have a larger support team for admin, IT, project management, and even a dedicated graphic design team - all these are functions I once had to juggle when we were first starting out! So yeah, I need someone to kick me, really!

Ha ha, OK, I will send someone round! How about working techniques with regards to the art itself and new developments or new hardware/software that you are finding you cant live without?

Same thing so far. Still hooked on Photoshop and Corel Painter and, of course, the Wacom tablets, but we are also experimenting more with vector art for certain projects, too. Coming from a background in graphic design, one of our big dreams is to be able to really bridge the two areas of "painted" illustrations and graphic design illustration. Being creative people, we're pushing to take the inevitable step next - creating our own





properties. I think, sooner or later, every artist gets the urge to do something original.

So what's on the horizon - further expansion? We're launching our own original comics really soon, and we're also hoping to document our growth as a studio via our studio blog. Because we always want to stay true to our philosophy as a studio created by artists for artists, having a blog and articulating our hopes helps us to stay true to our vision in all that we do. It's so easy for us to get caught up in the business that we forget that making money is the "how" and not the "why".

Wow, the blog idea is great (<http://blog.imaginaryfs.com/>). I'm sure that will be very inspirational for many, and for your own comics, too! You just keep on throwing stuff at us! Blogs are incredibly easy to start; just not so easy to keep up, especially for old fogeys like



me! We're very excited and scared about the future, but our experience has taught us that often a lot of our fears are based on imaginary problems (no pun intended). We just need to plan as best as we can, then just go in faith and deal with whatever comes, and hope we survive! I told you we're not your typical studio!

Well from our point of view it seems you are making an excellent job of it so far!

I can tell you that the more we progress, the harder it is to move forward. We keep finding ourselves competing in larger playing fields with bigger boys where the chances of us succeeding are even slimmer, but we have a great team and I believe that because we have really given our artists a lot of respect in what we do, that when the time comes, we're going to face anything as a studio together, and that will make a lot of difference. Actually, I have to say that we have seen a lot of support from artists outside of the studios, too. We often get notes of support from strangers writing in, or fans who have been watching our work or seen them in magazines such as 2DArtist! Yay!! So we do want to thank those of you who have written in to encourage us!



Well, many thanks again for your time, Ed. It has been great speaking with you and hearing about your progression.

Thanks for catching up with us again, Tom.

Imaginary Friends Studios

For more information please visit:

www.imaginaryfs.com

Or contact:

Imaginary FS Pte Ltd

131 East Coast Road #02-01,

Singapore,

428816

Tel: 65 6348 4024

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Article by: Tom Greenway

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*"I don't believe that
having artistic
talent is based on
genes. I think
it's a mixture of
childhood
influences
and a certain type
of curious
personality.,
...*

IS ART A GIFT?

This month, we've asked 2D artists from a variety of
backgrounds and locations around the world:

*Do you think art is a gift
that you inherit from
your parents, or is it
something that can be
encouraged simply by your
surroundings, lifestyle, or
just sheer perseverance?*

Here's what they said...

IS ART A GIFT...?

Andrew Hou

Senior Concept Artist

Webzen, Seoul, South Korea

"I don't know where the "gift" comes from. In fact, I don't even think there is a gift. I did take drawing lessons when I was young, but then I think most little kids did. My interest originally was computer programming; back then stuff like gaming, etc. didn't seem to exist, or at least was not too popular. Computers were *the* way to get a good job, etc. But I was rebellious and dropped out and decided to give art a shot when I was 21."

Artie

Freelance Concept Artist & Illustrator

Prague, Czech Republic

"I inherited it from my grandfather, perhaps..."

Benita Winckler

Freelance Illustrator

Berlin, Germany

"Art has many faces. And every art form requires love, dedication and commitment to reach mastery. No matter what profession you choose, you can either do it with grace and



Image By: Benita Winckler



Image by Andrew Hou

style or thoughtlessly and sloppily. To me, the question would rather be: can that "feeling for quality" be learned, or is it inherited? If you want to become an illustrator, it certainly helps if your parents surround you with art materials early on. I have been lucky that way since my mother is an artist and I had everything from oils to chalks to ruin our carpets. But as always: there are no fixed rules as there are no two people the same."

Christophe Vacher

Concept Artist, Painter & Art Director

Luxembourg & Los Angeles, USA

"I can't really talk for all artists here, because everyone's background is different. Various experiences and circumstances shaped the reasons why they became artists. But in my case, I think it's a bit of both. My mom had drawing abilities, but never really tried to go

far with them. Pretty much all my brothers and sisters actually had artistic abilities, but most of them decided to go into science or mechanics. I always wanted to be an artist; trying to copy comic books even before I knew how to write. That being said, once you have a "click" or make the conscious decision that you are going to be an artist, it belongs to you and you only to immerse yourself, live and persevere in this artistic environment."

Cyril Rolando

"When I was a child, my father drew a picture on the walls of his office with an airbrush. I enjoyed his skills but he stopped doing this kind of work. There's no artist in my family. When I was this child, I wanted to be a chemist or an artist, but my 'artworks' were really bad to see. After obtaining my General Certificate of Education, I had to choose a career. I failed the entrance examination to an art school and I went to a University of Psychology...

"I began drawing on computers one year later; I was 19 and I was a really bad artist. But persevering, three years later I drew what I am able to draw today. So, to answer your question, I have to choose all of those options."



Image By: Christophe Vacher



Image by Daniela Uhlig

Daniela Uhlig

Graphic Designer & Illustrator

Mobil Entertainment Company, Berlin, Germany

"Hmmm, I don't know if art, or rather talent, is heritable, but talent is very important as a basic. Without talent you can just learn up to a certain point (in my opinion). But endurance is always essential."

Daniele Bigi

Lead Lighter & Composer

Aardman Animation, Bristol UK

"I think that everyone has a potential to create something artistic. This potential can become something concrete through study, practice and hard work. Everyone can achieve great results but there are some people who have a greater potential than others, and through their work they are able to accomplish results unreachable for everybody else."



Image by Kerem Beyit

Don Seegmiller

Don Seegmiller
Freelance Concept Artist

Freelance Concept Artist, Illustrator & Artist

Utah, USA

"I believe that art is a combination of talent and hard work. I know good artists with not as much talent that were eventually better artists than gifted artists that did not work hard."

Egil Paulsen

"My parents are not of the artistic kind, so I can say that I have approached this through my own interest and inspiration. But I must have earned some abilities like patience, a steady hand, and an ability to translate the world around me. But I think it's a bit of everything, really."

Erich Schreiner

Freelance Artist

Germany

"I think there is no talent, just hard work. I decided four years ago to make a living out of drawing and painting, and simply pursued that goal. It took lots of hours at the drawing table and computer, lots of trial and error, but now I see the chance to get where I wanted to. A publication follows a commission and so on... I was 28 years old when I changed my goals, so it is never too late."

Justin Kellis

Graphic Artist

KICK Design, New York City, USA

"There is a pervasive thought that artistic ability is simply something you are born with. And while this may partially be true (after all some people lean toward creative activities more so than others), in my experience artistic ability is solely the result of how much effort you put into it. There is not a successful commercial artist or illustrator alive today that isn't the product of his own determination."

Kerem Beyit

Concept artist & Illustrator

Aranim Media Factory, Turkey

"Well I guess part of it is hereditary, but you have to train yourself with perseverance."

Kristen Fischer

"Talent, I think, is innate but can be honed."



Image by Mikko Kinnunen

Mike Corriero

Freelance Concept Artist & Illustrator

Colonia, NJ, USA

"I think this is something that can be seen in all walks of life. I have friends who are really talented and found out later that their parents were well known illustrators in the industry. So it goes to show that their up-bringing and the surrounding of art in their family may have had a great influence and impact on their interest and talent in art. The fact that they grew up around people who were capable of teaching them from childhood shows it can be genetic or even just taught. I do think that there are cases in which a child is capable of learning art and becoming very talented at what they do if they work hard enough and dedicate themselves to their goals. I have seen this a number of times on art forums where, just through the sheer perseverance, one member went from your average artist to someone talented enough to work for a major studio within a year. It's obvious to me that there are some people born with the gift and others need to work harder at it, but I think everyone has the ability to learn and improve through their surroundings and lifestyle."

Mikko Kinnunen

Environment Artist

Recoil Games, Helsinki, Finland

"I don't believe that having artistic talent is based on genes. I think it's a mixture of childhood influences and a certain type of curious personality. The



Image by Mike Corriero

potential has to be materialized with hard work. Talent alone doesn't really mean much in my opinion."

Misty Coats

UI & Concept Artist

High Voltage Software, IL, USA

"For the longest time I used to think that art was something you inherited from your parents, since my dad was a really talented artist as well. But as I got older I started to realise that art really is not a genetic thing... Anyone can develop into a fantastic artist, it just takes practice and perseverance. As long as you strive to achieve something great, you will - you just need the right motivation and passion for it."

Paul Wright

"I think it's a gift that has to be worked and worked at. In my case, it skipped a generation; my maternal grandfather had the artistic talent. A good, creative training is invaluable."

Raluca Tosifescu

"In my case, it wasn't inherited in any way, and had nothing to do with my education. The need to draw emerged from some events that took place in my life, mostly when I was a kid, I suppose."

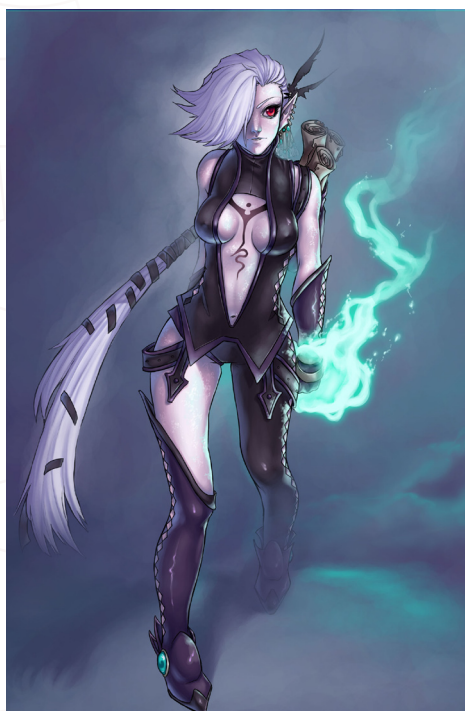


Image by Misty Coats



Image by Roy Stein

Robert Chang

Concept Artist

Cryptic Studios, Los Gatos, California, USA

"You cannot inherit creative talent - that's been proven scientifically (although you do inherit intelligence). Perseverance alone, without talent, will only get you so far - you might become a professional and a regular name in your field, but without talent you won't become a master in the traditional sense of the word. Talent isn't one single thing, it's a combination of various qualities that collectively form your aptitude for a given endeavour. Your ability to absorb knowledge, to analyse and apply that knowledge; eye/hand coordination, tenacity, emotional intelligence, imagination, originality, attention to detail, ability to see the big picture, ability to work smartly, not just hard, and so on. Of course, talent without hard work

won't get you far either - you'd just be a talented couch potato."

Robin Chyo

Art Director, Concept Artist, Illustrator, Composer, Writer, Director, Photographer
iWin Inc. & Freelance, San Francisco, USA

"I think art is certainly not something you're born with. I think if you want to be an artist for a living and you're not the best there is, your ambition will be extremely important in helping you grow artistically."

Roy Stein

"I believe it is a combination of a lot of things I went through as a child. For as long as I can remember, I have been drawing and painting."

Ryohei Hase

Illustrator & Designer

Bandai Namco Games, Tokyo, Japan

"It is my surroundings and life style. My parents are not interested in art."

Sam Lamont

2D Animation Student

Glamorgan University, Trefforest, Wales, UK

"I think that most people are born with a 'natural' ability in something, and so yes, I believe it's something you can inherit. However, I think most people with the right amount of practice, inspiration and patience can learn to do anything."

Sasha Podogrny

Designer (<http://tiro.by>)

Belorus, Minsk

"Art is a gift, influenced by surroundings, and is simply hard everyday work. It is probably the same as a huge puzzle. A lot of small important pieces – you gather and gather them and there is no end to it. Sometimes they don't match or get lost. It doesn't sound fun though, but I can't avoid living in art."

Simon Legrand

"I would really like to say that it is not inherited. I think being an artist is the result



Image by Ryohei Hase



Image By: Simon Legrand

of an upbringing and an education process. I am, however, probably the wrong person to say that. Both of my parents are accomplished artists, in both visual arts and music. I've always hated when people just attribute it to talent. How many times do you hear someone say, "I wish I could draw... But I'm not talented". I truly believe that this is wrong and that anyone with the will to spend at least an hour a day sketching can get to some great results within a few years. None of us got to where we are by just "wishing we could draw"... Surroundings, lifestyle and perseverance are definitely the key, to me."

"To a large extent I think artistic ability is a talent you're born with, although it takes a great deal of effort to take that raw talent and refine it to produce good artwork."

Tiberius Viris

Lead Matte Painter

King of Houston, Singapore

"Sure, when it's about art, some inherited talent

is preferred, but this doesn't mean that only some people can do art. After all, art is a gift left by gods for all of us. And enough passion, dedication and imagination can be just as good as that talent."

Tim Warnock

Senior Matte Painter

Intelligent Creatures, Toronto Ontario, Canada

"I would say all of the above. I think that some people are born with a creative bent... visual thinkers with a drive to create. How that plays out depends on the person's environment and whether or not that part of their personality is nurtured. Becoming a skilled craftsman has everything to do with perseverance and a commitment to learning. I think a less creative person could still find a place in the art world if they worked hard."

Tuna Ferit

"My family made an impact on my interest in Art. My mother, realising my potential and ability towards art, encouraged me to enter the Fine Arts Faculty. She herself has the ability to paint, and her formal education was in the area of fine arts. But I also think that my personality, being a perfectionist, persistent and patient, enables me to develop my natural aptitude. Both my realistic portraits and medical illustrations require patience and care. For example, for an A4 paper portrait I work for about three weeks. Because of my patience with details, my pencil portraits are praised and are interesting. My medical illustrations also need patience. For example, let's take a drawing which shows procedural steps of a surgery; if the illustration was done without enough care then some simple

details may slip away from artist's representation. As a result, the drawing is wrong without the simple details, and all these may result in bad surgery. If a medical illustration has enough quality, a doctor can tell his procedural steps of surgery correctly in his article."

Vinegar

Freelance Artist

Warsaw, Poland

"Both actually. Of course, natural talent inherited from your family helps a lot in making things easier and quicker, but I've seen the works of many people who have never had anyone drawing in their family, and just through a lot of practice they became really great. I'm really convinced a person without such heritage can become a great artist, but only if he/she feels the urge to."

Vitaly S. Alexius

Freelance Illustrator

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

"I believe that talent is passed down genetically, as I myself have a father and a great-grandfather with mind-bending art talents. However, it also requires a lot of drawing work to develop a talent, for it is just the type of earth upon which the flower of your artworks will blossom. As long as you water that flower daily by drawing, painting, sculpting etcetera, then you too can create marvellous works."

Y. Zoner Yurtseven

"All of them could be a factor for art. Everyone can have an ability in a subject, but the important part is how to discover it. So the factors come out in different ways when discovering ability. For me, I could say that art is a gift from my parents, it is something that I have encouraged through my lifestyle, education and the other surroundings, but mostly through perseverance."

Next issue:

Join us next month when we ask artists:

What tells you when a piece of work is complete?



Image by Vitaly S Alexius

the shorts drawer

Introduction:

A Collection of the finest independent animated movies and commercial trailers. The DVD includes work from a whole number of different sources, such as students, independents animators and commercial studios. We want people to be able to view this wealth of elite animation in one convenient high resolution package whilst generating much exposure for these talented artists at the same time.



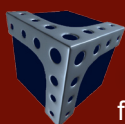
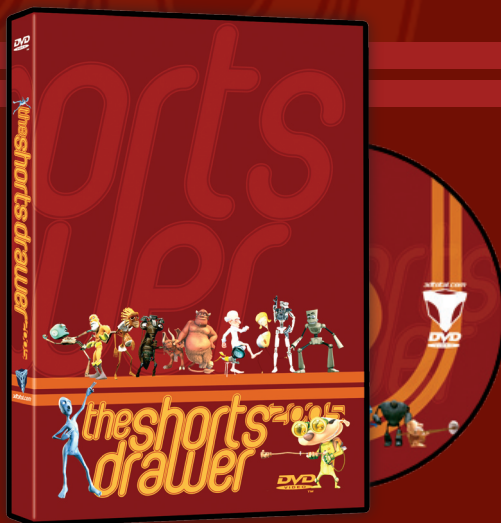
the shorts drawer 2004

- Running Time: 3hrs 8 mins
- 27 Shorts movies
- 6 Clips & Trailers
- Region Free, NTSC & PAL versions
- Shorts & trailers from artist and studio like:
 - Blur Studios
 - Brian Taylor
 - Marco Spitori
 - Patrick Beaulieu
 - & Alex Mateo



the shorts drawer 2005

- Running Time: 3hrs 8 mins
- 27 Shorts movies
- 3 Trailers
- Region Free, NTSC & PAL versions
- Shorts & trailers from studios such as:
 - Blur Studios
 - Keytoon Animations Studios
 - Redrover Studios
 - & Platige Image
- Loads of extra including images and storyboards



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This Month we Feature:
Vlad Kuprienko aKa Duke, David Munoz Velazquez,
Andrew Hou, Cyril Van Der Haegen,
Mathieu Leyssenne, Stuart Jennett,
Paul Davies, David Palumbo,
Colin Gilmour, Andreas Rocha.





Leaving Home

Andreas Rocha

www.andreasrocha.com

rocha.andreas@gmail.com

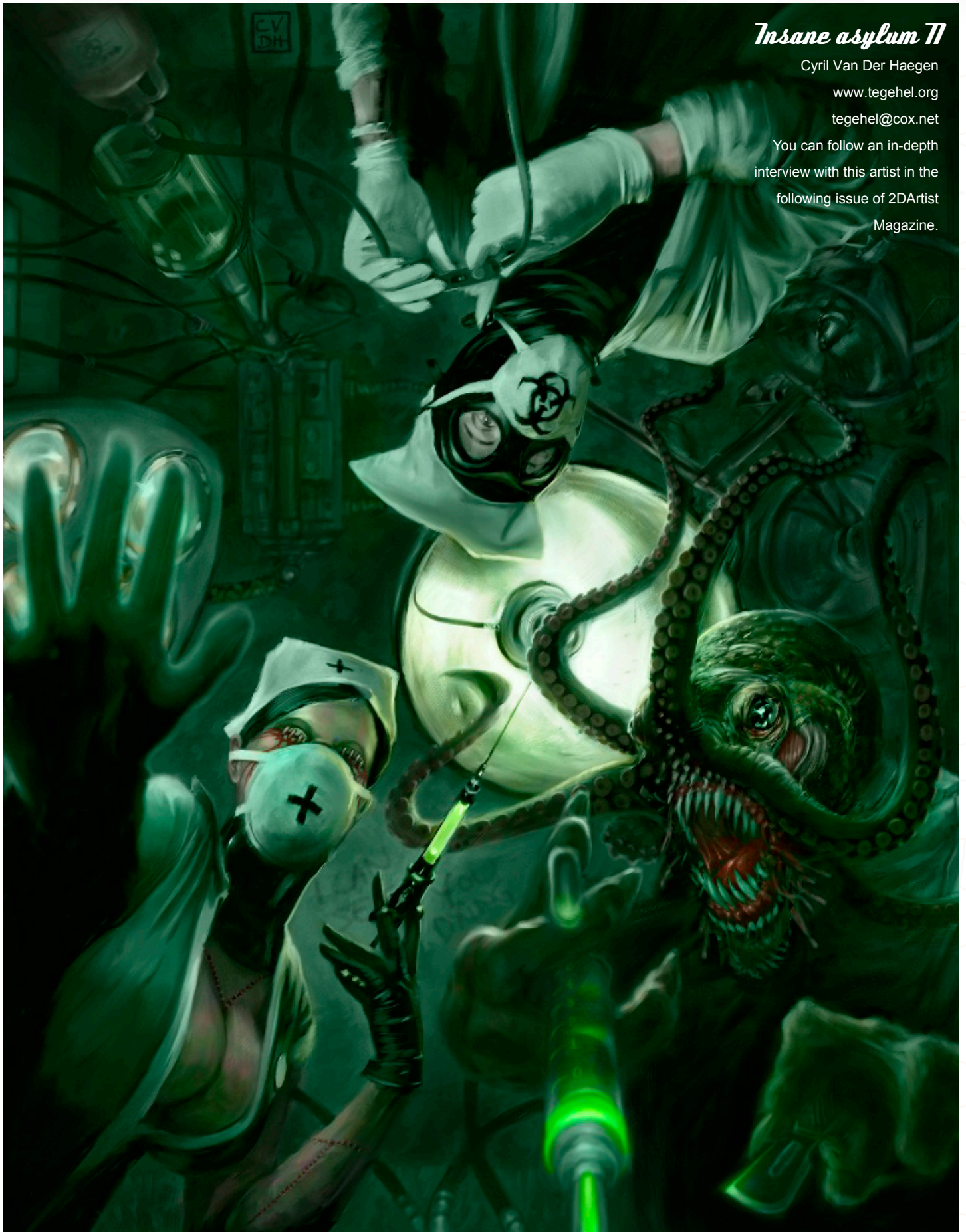
Eat This!

Paul Davies

www.pdportraits.co.uk

Paul@pdportraits.co.uk





Insane asylum II

Cyril Van Der Haegen

www.tegehel.org

tegehel@cox.net

You can follow an in-depth
interview with this artist in the
following issue of 2DArtist
Magazine.



Cold Sky

Vlad Kuprienko aKa Duke

<http://dreamlab.comgran.ru/>

duke.of.vampires@gmail.com

You can follow the 'Making of' this image in this issue of 2DArtist Magazine'

Blind Invader

David Munoz Velazquez

www.munozvelazquez.com

munozvelazquez@gmail.com



Pause

David Palumbo

www.dvpalumbo.com

dave@dvpalumbo.com

Home, sweet home...

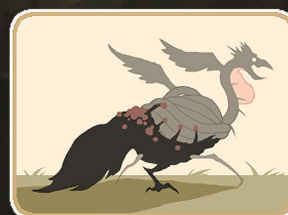
Mathieu Leyssenne

www.aniii.com

ani@aniii.com

Turn to page 16 to read and
interview with Mathieu.





Came from above

Andrew Hou

<http://njoo.deviantart.com>

www.andrewhou.com

n-joo@hotmail.com



New Squid

Stuart Jennett

www.stuartjennett.com

stuartjennett@hotmail.com

You can follow an in-depth interview with this artist in 2DArtist Magazine August Issue.

World of Warcraft CC Margaret Fowl

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Mark Evans

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Image courtesy of Olivier Derouetteau, <http://olive2d.free.fr>

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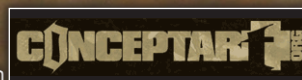
2DA challenge

2DArtist Magazine introduces the new Challenge section of the mag. Every month, we will run the challenges, available for anyone to enter, for prizes and goodies from the www.3dtotal.com shop and also to be featured in this very magazine! The 2D Challenge runs in the conceptart.org forums, and the 3D challenge runs in the threeddy.com forum. Here we will display the winners from the previous month's challenge and the Making Of's from the month before that...

SNAIL

Stylised Animal challenge

In Association with



Stylised Animal Challenge

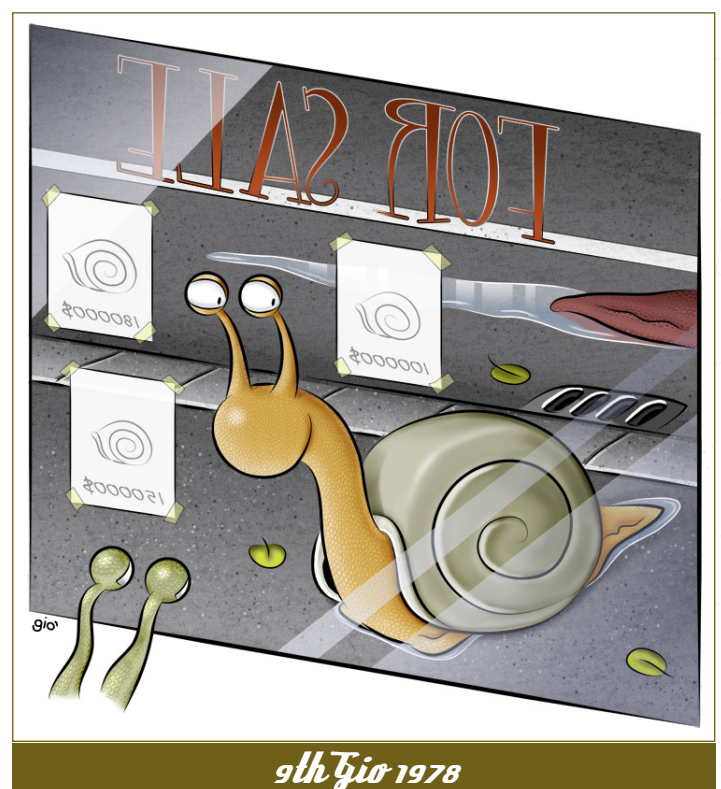
Snail

The Challenge

Welcome to the Stylised Animal Monthly Challenge. Each month, we will select an animal and post some images in the **Forum Thread** as reference. All you have to do is to create a 2D image of this creature in a stylised/abstract/cartoon style, whilst keeping your creature instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 2DArtist Magazine on how to create stylised animals, such as you see in the many feature films and cartoon galleries. We thought this regular competition might bring in just the images and Making Of's that we need, whilst giving away great prizes and exposure. If it continues in success, we will try to boost the prizes as much as possible! This month's animal was the 'Snail'. Here you can see the top 11 placed entries, as voted for by the public...

What are we looking for?

Funny and humorous entries which break the animal down to its most recognisable components; emphasise these in whichever ways you think best, and render your stylised/abstract/cartoon masterpiece. The rules are pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 2D render (minor post work is OK); it's up to you if you want to have a background or include graphical elements or text on your image. Renders of the 800 pixel dimension sound about right, but the winners will be featured in 2DArtist Magazine, so if you can





8th Southern

create some higher resolution images, too - all the better! There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, just make sure your final image is posted in the main competition thread before the deadline. We require the top 3 winners to submit Making Of overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal or in 2DArtist magazine. These need to show the stages of your creation; different elements and some brief explanation text of why, and how, you did what you did. We will format this into some nice-looking pages to give you some great exposure, and us some quality content! Each competition will have one main thread which starts with the brief at the top. All entrants should post all WIP's, give feedback and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month...



7th Caruso Juan



6th *Fun Trouver*



5th *Stephan R*



4th *Fvallejo*



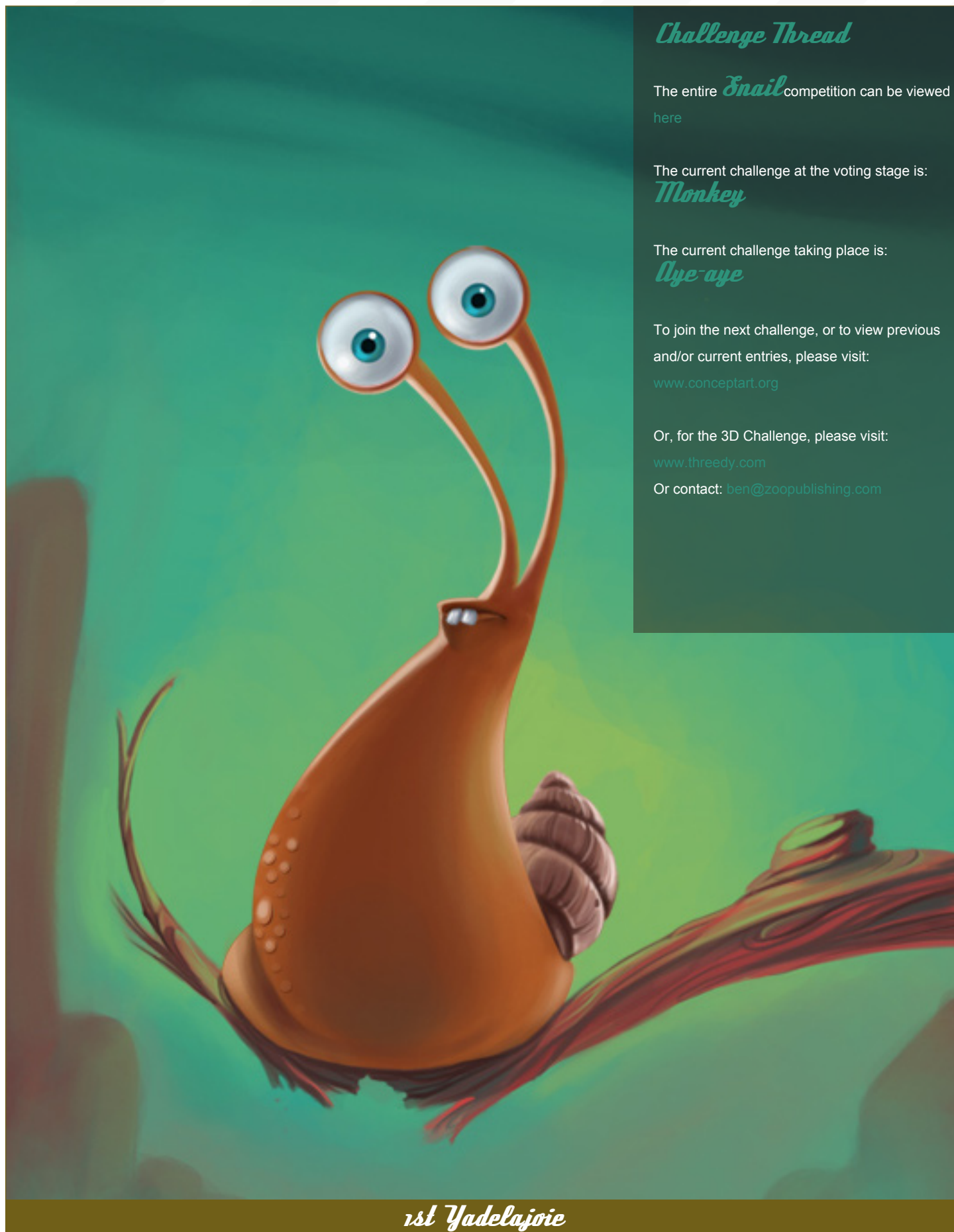
2d Artist

3rd Daveneale



27
05

2nd 28th Wing



Challenge Thread

The entire *Snail* competition can be viewed [here](#)

The current challenge at the voting stage is:
Monkey

The current challenge taking place is:
Eye-eye

To join the next challenge, or to view previous and/or current entries, please visit:

www.conceptart.org

Or, for the 3D Challenge, please visit:

www.threeddy.com

Or contact: ben@zoopublishing.com

1st Yadelajoie

Here is the making of from last months 'Ant Eater' challenge winner 28th Wing

Sketching

After reading the topic, I knew that I wished for a hectic, dynamic scene. I wanted a fable, where the smallest ant takes on the big bad anteater. To start with, I checked reference pictures, tried to discover what would be typical for an anteater, made some pencil sketches focusing on shape, and gave a strange flying pose to my main character (Fig01).

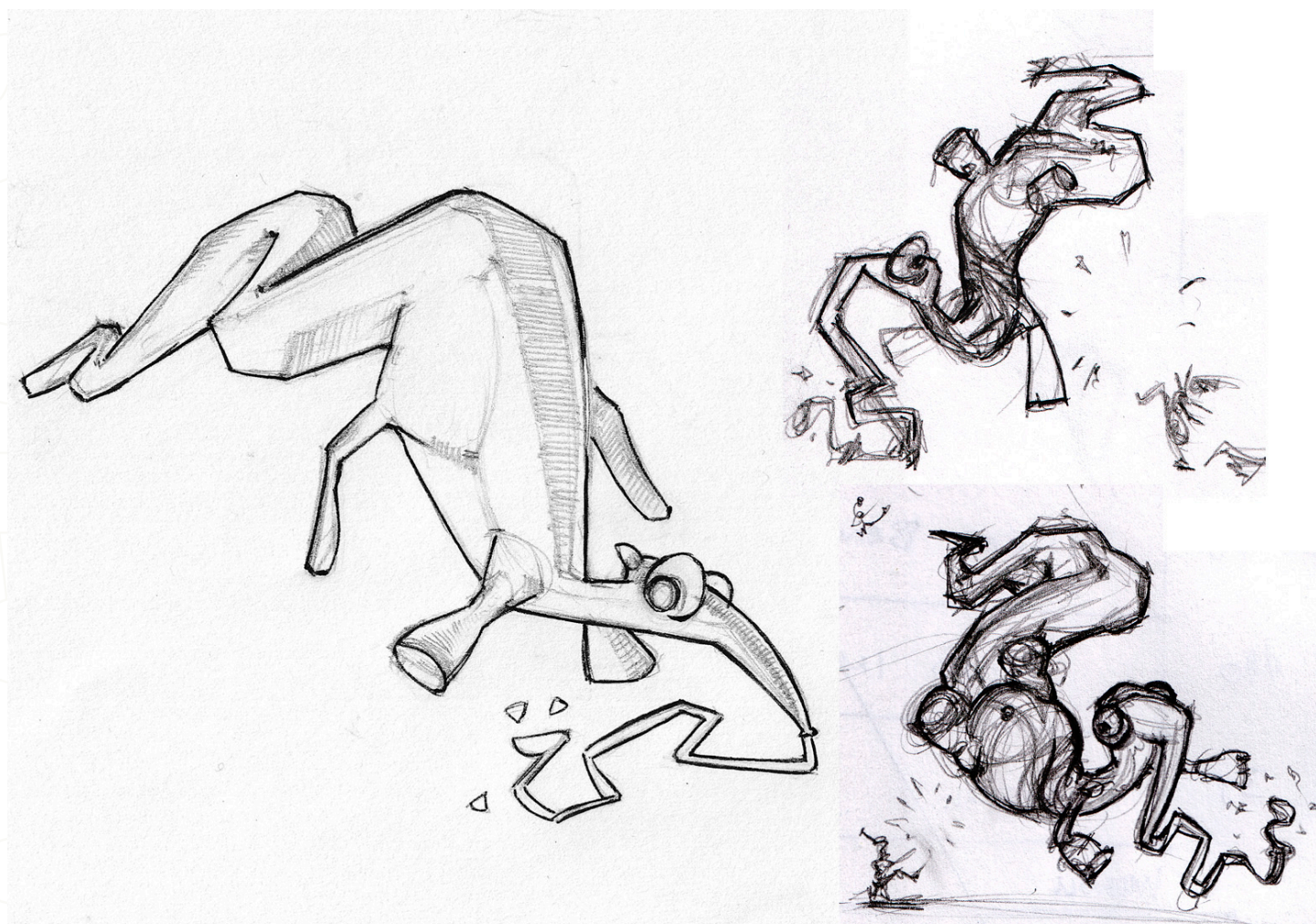


Fig01



Fig2a

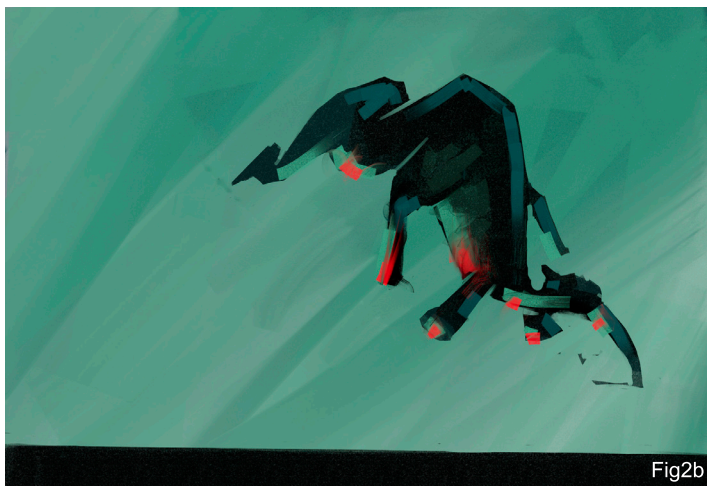


Fig2b

Colouring

I scanned my chosen drawing and opened it in ArtRage 2, where my main tools were the Paint Roller and Eraser. I didn't want anything too detailed, but more of a sketchy style. I used Multiply for the scanned layer and started working on the background with a few blueish Paint Roller strokes (Fig02a).

On another layer, I freely painted the anteater with my darkest colour, added some reflex colour to the background, and finished working on the contour using the eraser (Fig02b).

I decided that I needed a punchy effect for the background of the ant (Fig02c), and whilst I drew I came up with the story of a Japanese ninja ant kicking up my hero. So, with this in mind, I created another layer with a rising sun, as a nice background for my ant, which gave the punchy effect that I desired.

Refinement

I added more details to my anteater to form the body, legs and so on. I wasn't satisfied with background effect, so I gave it a big blast. I added



Fig2c

colour from the explosion onto the anteater's body, and added a big white eye to emphasise my character's toon-like properties (Fig03).

Final Touches

Finally, I added my ant using a paint roller stroke, and quickly worked into it with a few strokes of the eraser. I then repaired my anteater's right leg, because it looked like an elephant's leg. As a label, I used a little cheat: I exported the image as a jpeg from ArtRage, and played in Corel with the fonts and its positions. I then exported the file, opened it in ArtRage as a Tracing Image, and painted over the text with a few strokes on a separate layer (Fig04).

28th Wing

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.28thwing.com

Or contact them at:

janos.kiss@28thwing.com

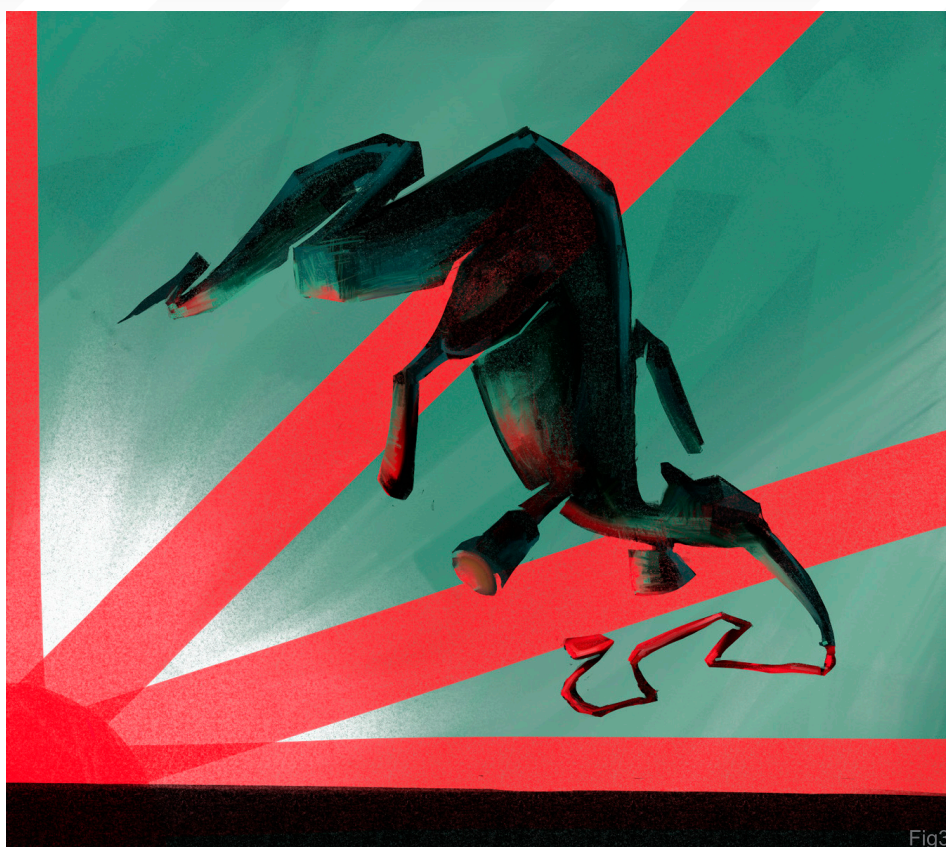


Fig3



Fig4

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"I'm often asked about my brushes - which one I use for the skin - but in fact I don't have a lot of brushes."

Melanie Delon shows
us some really handy
ways of creating
custom brushes in
order to paint realistic
skin...

Skin Brushes

Skin Brushes

Created In:

Photoshop CS2

Custom Brushes

I'm often asked about my brushes - which one I use for the skin - but in fact I don't have a lot of brushes. The main ones are a basic hard round edged brush, a speckled one and a "smoothly textured" one. In this little tutorial, I'll explain how to create the custom ones and when to use them. Each brush is made in Photoshop CS2

The Speckled Brush

This brush is the best that I have used so far to achieve a painterly feel, and you can use it for everything!

Create it...

The technique is really simple... On a new white canvas with a basic round edged brush, I'll paint little random black dots of different shapes and sizes. I usually start without a lot of dots, and I want my brush very low in opacity (Fig01). I'll then add more dots, but with a very low opacity, just to bring more texture to the future brush (Fig02). Once this step is OK, I'll define this image as a brush, so I go into the Edit mode and click on "Define Brush Preset" (Fig03), and click OK in the pop-up. Now I have my new brush in the list, ready to be used...

Settings...

Now the fun part begins... As you can see (Fig04), this brush is basically unusable as it is, and so I now have to tweak it. For this, I go into the Brushes palette (Fig05) where I set the

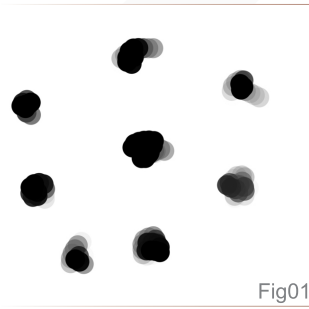


Fig01

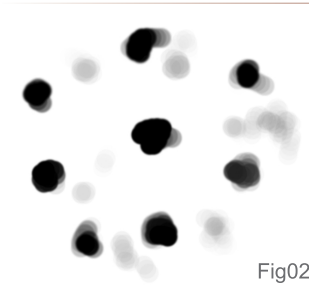


Fig02

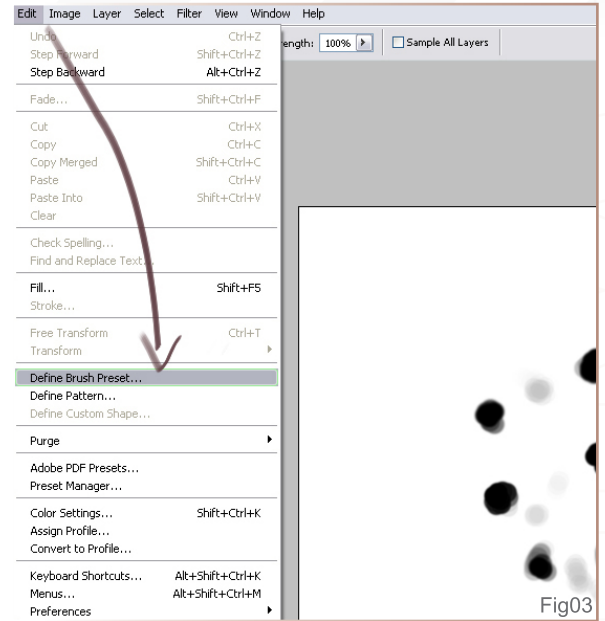


Fig03



Fig04

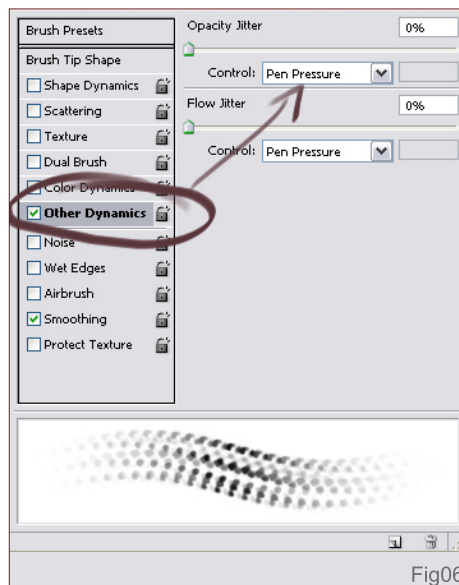


Fig06

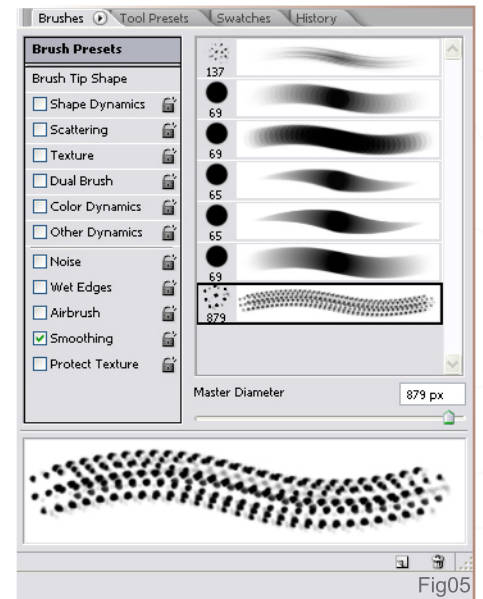


Fig05

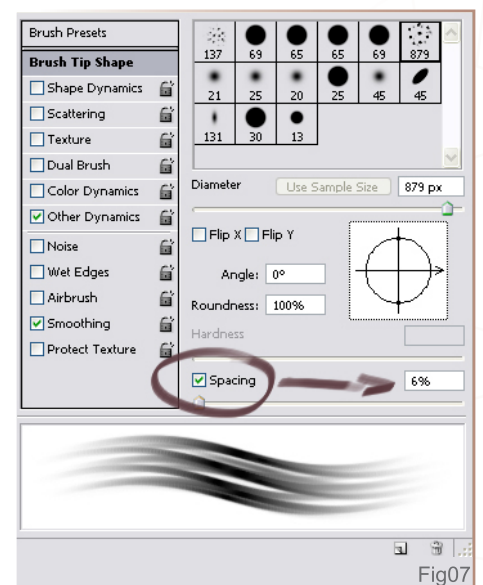


Fig07



Fig08

opacity to Pen Pressure (Fig06) and the spacing to 6% (Fig07). The settings are now OK, and this new brush looks much better (Fig08), so I'll save it (Fig09).

You can do different versions of the brush, some with more dots or less - just try them! It's good to have several speckled brushes and combine them to create a great texture.

In action...

Now, how to use it... This kind of brush is good when you need to bring texture and colour variation; you can use it to bring life to a base done with a basic round edge (Fig10), to paint hair (Fig11), or to paint fabric (Fig12). This brush can be used for unlimited purposes!

The "Smoothly Textured" Brush

This one is a kind of hybrid brush; it's a mix of a basic round edge and a speckled brush, so let's see how to create it!

Create it...

For the base (on a white canvas), I'll use a speckled brush and scribble an oval shape softly with a very low opacity (Fig13). Then I'll add more intensity here and there with another speckled brush, or a basic round edge (Fig14). I'm now satisfied with the general shape so I'll define it as a new brush (Edit > Define Brush Preset) (Fig15) and move on to the settings...

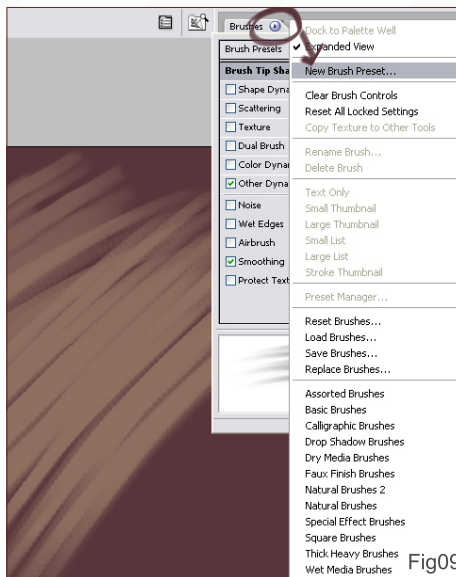


Fig09

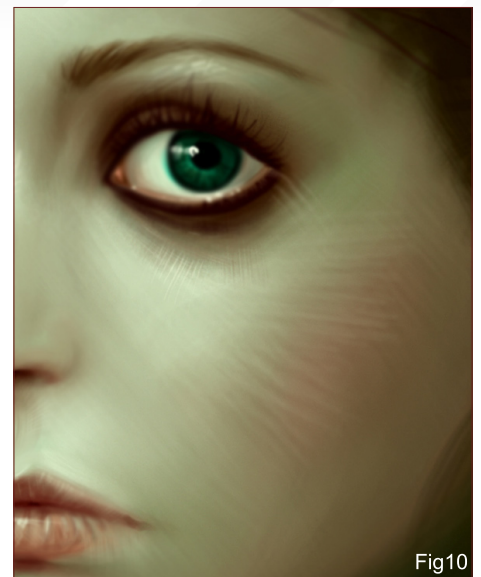


Fig10

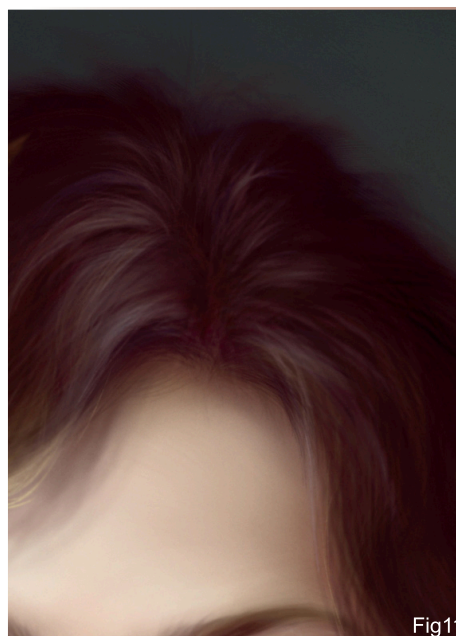


Fig11

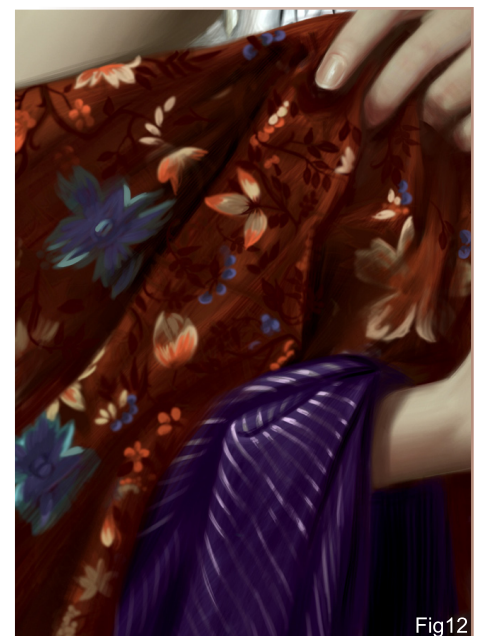


Fig12

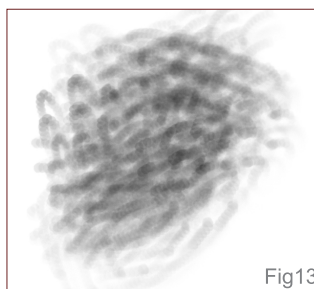


Fig13

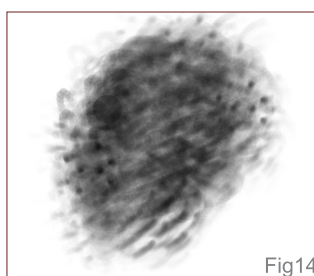


Fig14

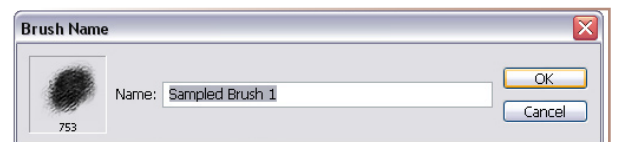
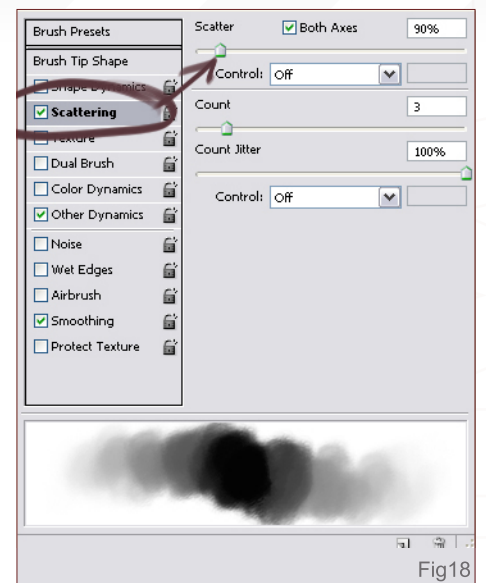
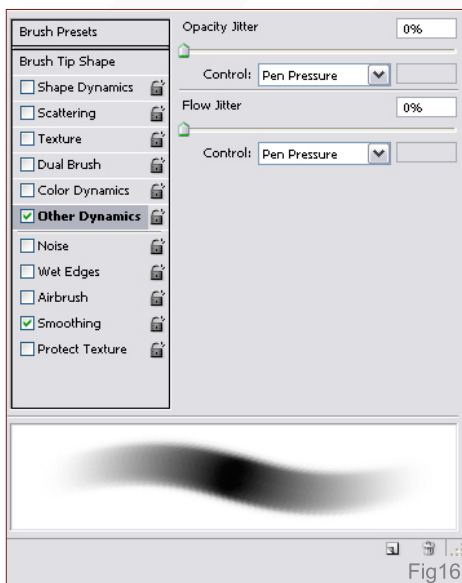


Fig15

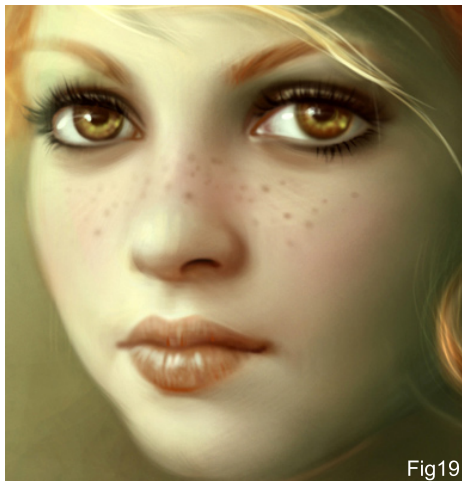


Settings...

As usual, I set the opacity to Pen Pressure and the spacing to 12%, then I save the new presets (Fig16). The brush will now look like Fig17. You can of course play with the different settings to find nice effects, like the scattering mode (Fig18) which is pretty handy to create textured brushes.

In action...

Most of the time, I use this one after the speckled brush when I want to smooth the skin (Fig19). This brush will not destroy all the little colour variations obtained previously, so don't worry about that - the only rule is to use it with a very low opacity. This step will bring the last smoothing touches and unify the whole texture (Fig20). You can use it as a starting point for most textures!



Melanie Delon

For more from this artist visit:

www.eskarina-circus.com

Or contact:

esk@eskarina-circus.com



Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. We've asked two artists to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we will feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes. This month, **Andreas Rocha** and **Levente Peterffy** tackle:

DESTROYED CITY



LEVENTE PETERFFY

Created In:

Photoshop

To start with, let's think about the topic: Destroyed City. The topic gives us a clue about the type of colour scales to use. If you feel you still can't grasp what colours to start with, try studying war movies and looking at imagery from World War 2. I feel they always have very saturated colours and a lot of dark tones. You almost never see extreme values of reds or yellows. Of course, this is a general way of looking at it and there are examples where a great variety of colours are used, but let's stick to the dark and rainy overcast moods that we usually see in movies...

Study the example (Fig01) and see if you recognise the colours that I used to start the painting with.

You will notice from Fig01 that I have picked dark saturated colours, using a soft edged brush that has already given some vague hints of smoke clouds. In Fig02 I blocked out the base of the buildings. The very same colours from Fig01 were used in Fig02 to paint the buildings.

This tutorial is about focusing on certain areas, and so I will concentrate on working on the centre of the building and will not spend too much time on the building to the right. From my experience, when you gain more and more experience with painting, you will notice that it is very ineffective to paint everything in great detail. The final image, especially for speed paintings, only needs to have the most important details. In this example, the details lie in the



Fig01

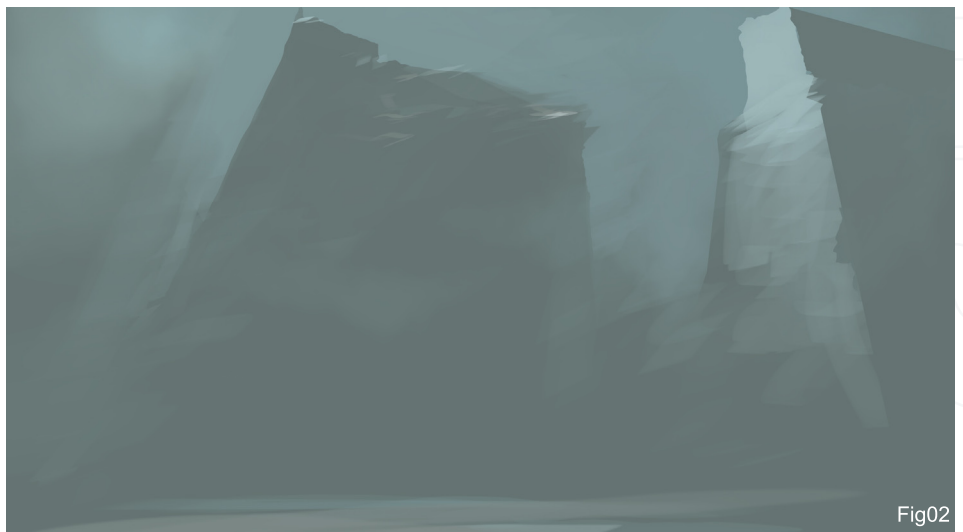


Fig02

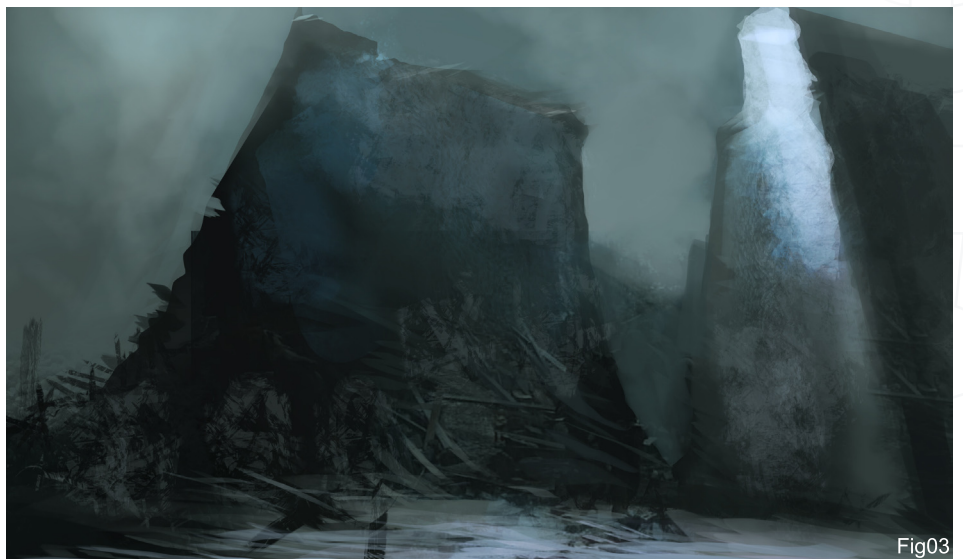
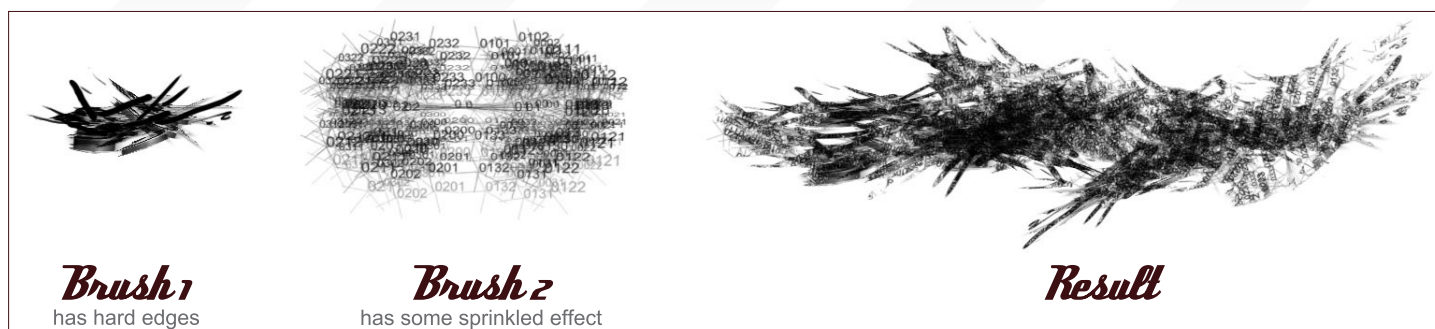


Fig03

destroyed central building, and even there the details are not spread throughout the whole building - where the light is stronger you can see details more clearly. You will also notice that in dark or contrasting shadows there can be a great amount of detail, depending on the light.

The top of the building in Fig03 contains details in its small textures. At the base of the building, the details are larger. The main reason for making them larger was because of the need to convey the shapes of debris. I only painted the top of the debris.



Since painting debris requires more of a texture than structure, we can use a custom brush to paint the textured details. A good and easy way is to use the dual brush setting in the brush settings and combine a hard-edged brush with a brush that has a “sprinkled” texture. Also try experimenting with the scattering setting while you are in brush settings. Above is an example of such a brush.

To paint windows and doors, all you need to do is to follow the structure lines and paint these objects parallel to them. Paint in low opacity and use the same type of colours you have already.

I enhanced the light to bring out the centre building even more. Some new colours were introduced on the building on the right, however you will notice that these aren't extremes (Fig04).

I then decided to tear out a part of the building on the right, in order to create more chaos (Fig05).

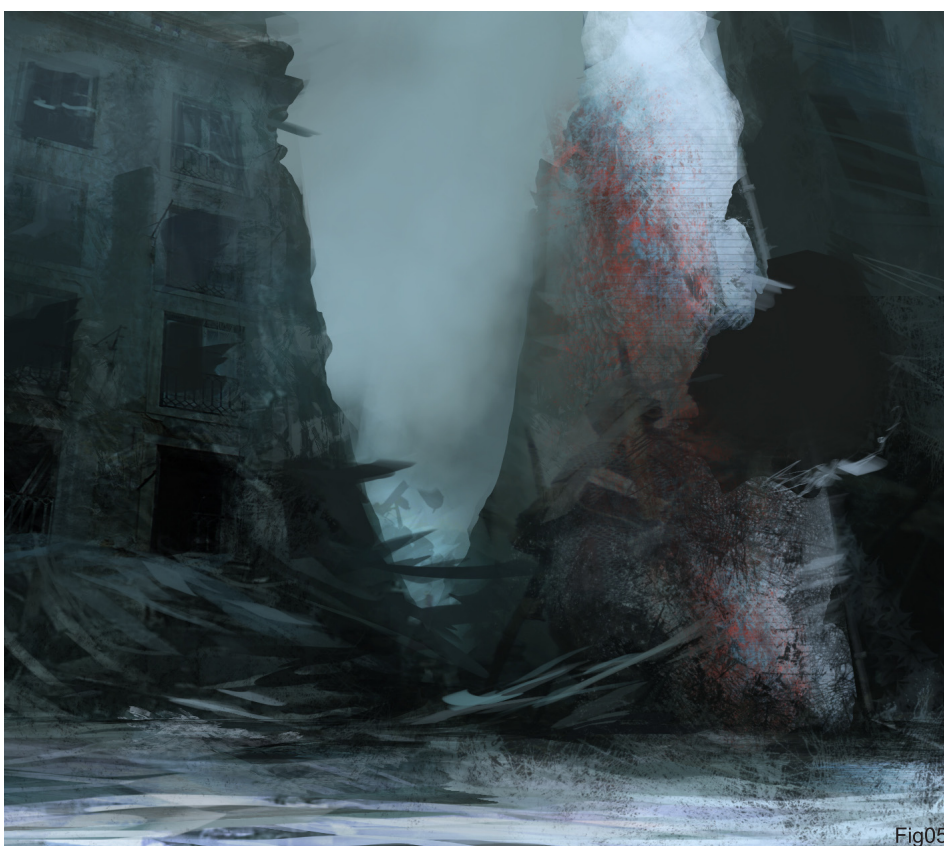




Fig06



Fig07



Levente Peterffy

For more from this artist visit

www.levantep.com

or contact

lp@levantep.com

Some silhouettes were created in back to add more buildings - this is a city after all (Fig06).

Colour adjustments in this examples were very minor, and after this step I was basically done. An unsharpen mask can also be used if you want to make the image crisper.

And there we go: Destroyed City (Fig07).

ANDREAS
RECHA*Created In:*

Painter and Photoshop CS3

When I first heard about speed painting, I thought that it would simply be a quickly executed painting, but speed painting is so much more than that! As soon as I grasped the concept behind it, I understood its value as practice for putting down the essential ingredients of a painting in the least amount of time, for example line, value, colour, composition, light, theme, mood and so on. Concentrating on the essential infuses the painting with character. Digital speed painting benefits from some really helpful tools that software has to offer, like custom brush creation, painting at different magnifications, ease in picking colours, layers and their associated blending modes, and (rather importantly) keyboard short-cuts for almost every command. Everything meets in a creation process where the mind goes beyond the tools and focuses only on content.

For this tutorial, the Destroyed City brief was a theme quite to my liking, because I've always had a fascination for ruined buildings - there's just something about them not being represented in their natural state and having been deconstructed to something abstract...

To get the juices flowing, I did a quick image search on the Internet from where I collected some photos and put them all into one document. I kept it open next to the painting most of the time so that I was able to quickly draw inspiration from it.



Fig01

I started out in Painter by creating a new 1000 x 600 pixel document and filling it with a brown wash colour. I then took a Thick Acrylic Round brush and quickly laid down some brush strokes to define the bigger masses that would compose the painting (Fig01).

The great thing about Painter's "thick" brushes is that their relief helps to add an interesting underlying texture with a lot of character, since it follows the brush strokes' direction. I was actually inspired by the artist Erik Tiemens who

does this extremely well in his conceptual art.

I had to apply these initial strokes with some confidence, since I really didn't know where I was going. Speed painting is often a subconsciousness-led process where you don't always have the time to be rational.

I then filled the canvas with a 30% opacity magenta (from the "Effects" menu), to somewhat unify the colours. Taking the magical glow brush (found under the F-X brushes) I added a strong light source to the painting (Fig02).

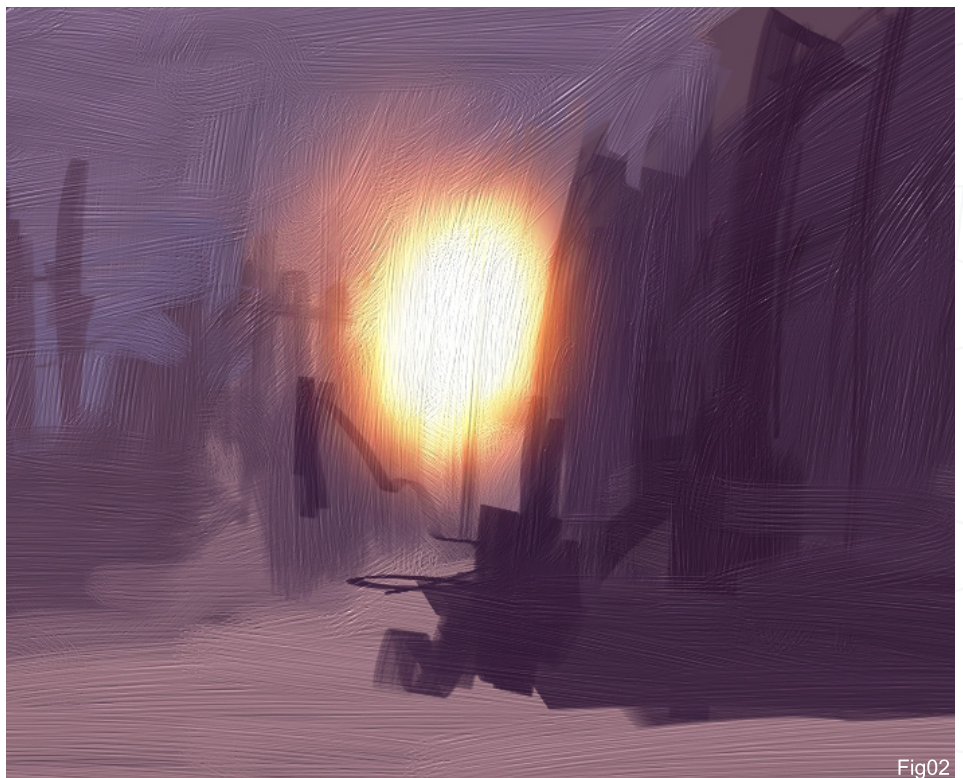


Fig02

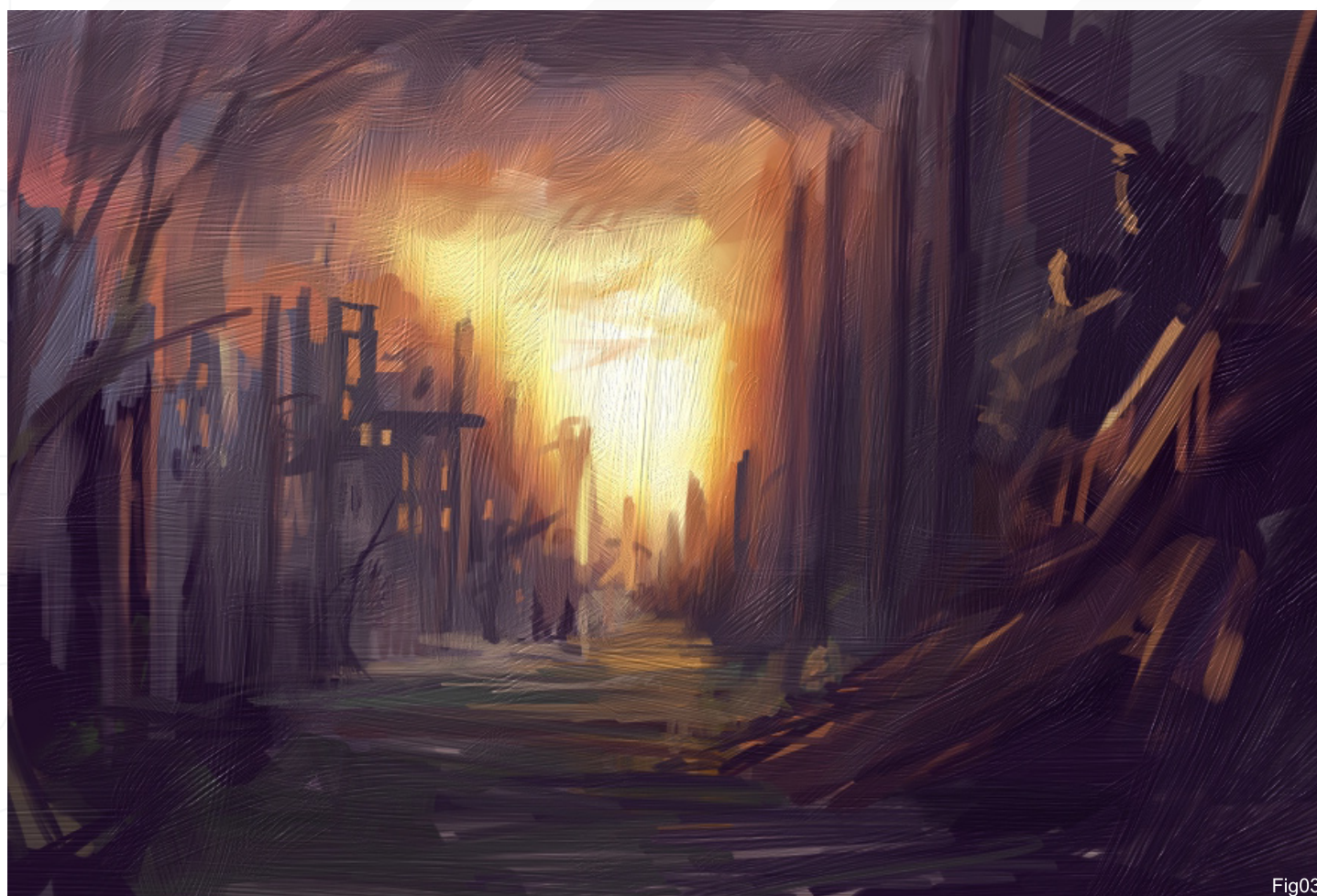


Fig03

Please be advised to use dark “not too saturated” colours when painting with this brush in order to achieve rich saturated effects. I then took an Oil Pastel and a Blender brush and started defining the actual scene (Fig03). It’s interesting to see how Painter keeps the “relief” information below, as if I had gessoed the canvas previously.

I then brought the painting into Photoshop to add more detail. (Why not use Painter all the way? Well, for me, Photoshop is much more intuitive when it comes to detail, adjustments and custom brushes.) First of all, I doubled the painting’s resolution, and then opened a new document and painted a section of a facade (Fig04). I brought this new object into my painting as a new layer which I copied and transformed several times to build up my destroyed city - which is quite a paradox! Keeping these copies as layers, I erased

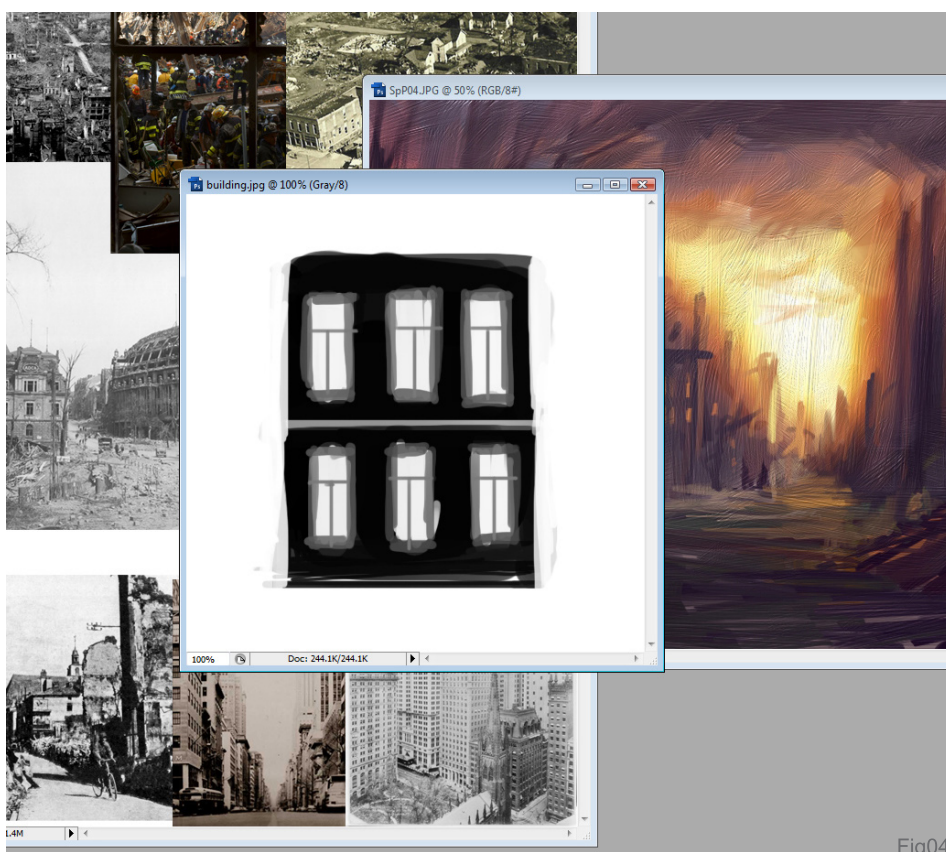


Fig04



portions and painted some quick brush strokes over them to add some variation.

In the final stages, I added some dead trees, which I had seen in some reference photos.

Fig05

Destroyed city

For more from this artist visit:

www.andreasrocha.com

Or contact:

rocha.andreas@gmail.com



Their branches broke up the rectangular look of the built environment (Fig05). Then finally, to add a bit of character and give the composition a human scale, I added a small figure silhouetted by strong reflections from the sun.

In the end, I applied the Smart Sharpen Filter, which is something I always do to bring out all the detail of the brushwork (Fig06).

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**Solutions for
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Using 3D

as a starting point for a Digital Painting

Over the course of the next three months, I shall be discussing some methods and techniques used to create a digital painting of an interior. More specifically, I will aim to show how 3D software can be used as a useful application in the process...

Part 1:

We will cover the reasons why 3D renders can prove invaluable tools in quickly and efficiently calculating perspective problems and supplying masks. We will take the idea from a concept sketch through to a simple 3D scene and finally to a digital painting where we will deal with establishing the tonal ranges.

Part 2:

We will continue by refining the painting in more detail and referring back to the 3D scene to further polish the details and eventually begin the colouring phase.

Part 3:

We will cover finishing the painting with additional lighting and adjustment layers to complete the overall mood.



Using 3D

as a starting point for a Digital Painting

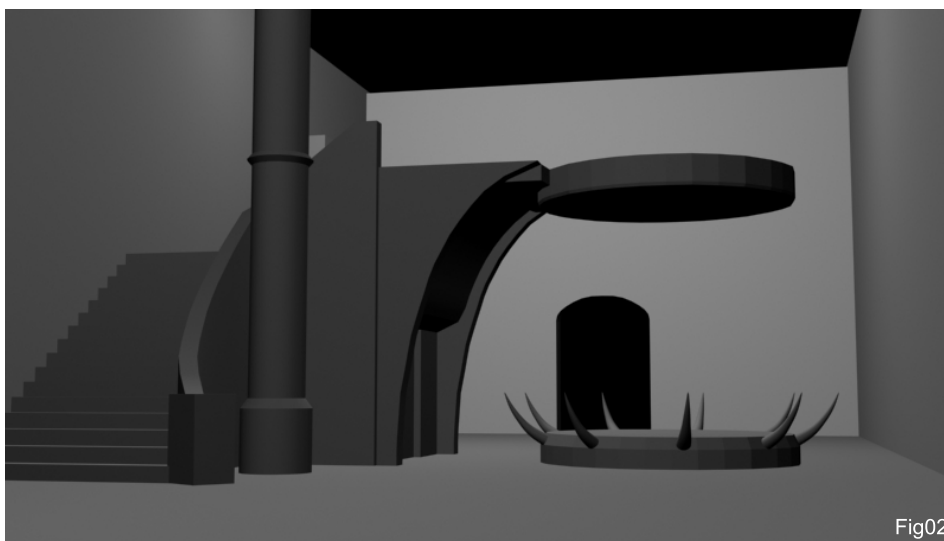
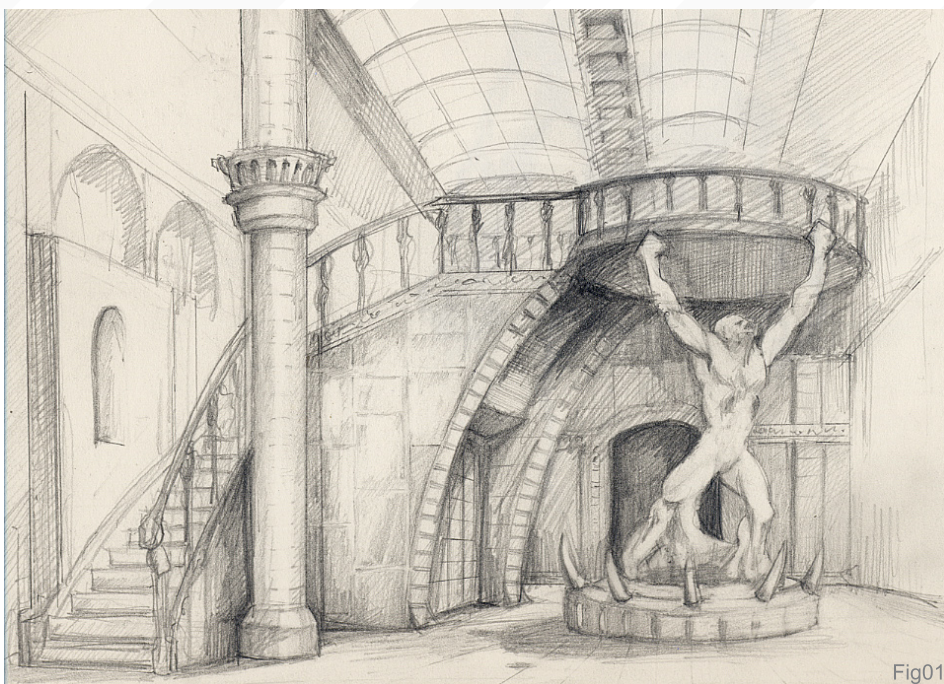
Created In:

Photoshop

Over the course of the next three months I shall be discussing some methods and techniques used to create a digital painting of an interior. More specifically I will aim to show how 3D software can be used as a useful application in the process.

Introduction

With a good deal of artistic output these days being produced entirely in a digital format, the tools that artists now have at their disposal have developed far beyond the realms of pencil and paper (although these still prove to be the consummate materials at the birth of an idea). From concept design to polished production pieces and certainly matte painting, the modern day artist would be hard pushed to avoid working without the aid of tools such as the ubiquitous Photoshop, and Painter. With this in mind, it follows that 3D programs such as 3DS Max, Maya and XSI, etc. offer a number of useful assets that can help inform and solve artistic issues, such as perspective and lighting. When it comes to drawing even a relatively simple scene that incorporates a few tricky shapes and curved forms, it can take a concentrated session to construct the perspective accurately by hand. By using a 3D package however, a simple representation can be built in a short time and a camera placed in the scene. This enables a swift mock up of the proposed composition and angle of view, but more importantly allows the artist to achieve an exact and authentic "perspective template". By moving the camera the artist now has a completely flexible method of experimenting with the composition and altering the viewpoint, as well as altering the camera settings to



exaggerate and distort the perspective slightly and thus change the mood and impact of the picture.

The following tutorial will aim to show how, with the use of a 3D package, a simple scene can be built in order to establish an accurate perspective guide for painting.

Concept

Once you have decided on an idea for your scene, I find it is always best to start with a sketch to explore and clarify some of the concepts. For this tutorial, I essentially wanted to describe a rather grand interior that included

a statue as a focal point with a glass panel roof and an interesting staircase. I wanted to try and achieve a Victorian quality about the scene that somehow spoke of a bygone era but with an air of ambiguity about it. I particularly liked the notion of using light to add drama and including a polished marble floor and ceramic bricks which the Victorians liked to use.

Due to the nature of this tutorial I did not spend too much time getting the perspective correct as this was going to be achieved in 3D, but rather just drew in some of the essential components which would later be modelled.

Building the 3D Scene

Once I had finished the rough sketch (Fig01) I then moved to 3DS Max to build a simple version of my drawing.

The first step was to construct a simple box that represented the walls and floor and then build the staircase and plinth. I also used a simple cylinder to represent a column with some variation to ensure the perspective was correct for details that could be added along its height (Fig02). As I was building the scene I thought it might be more dramatic to have the statue and plinth directly below the raised platform, almost as though it were supporting it, which was something I had not planned in the sketch. One other alteration I made was to add a curve to the staircase which added some interest to the composition.

The next stage was to put the staircase lamp in and put on the roof, which comprises of two long panelled, glass curves. In order to paint the iron framework I added the relevant number of subdivisions along the roof geometry which could then be used later to create an accurate structure and perspective.

I assigned a plain grey material to everything in the scene as we are only interested in the forms at this stage. By ticking the Wire checkbox in the material editor, the wall and ceiling geometry now display the individual polys, which is very

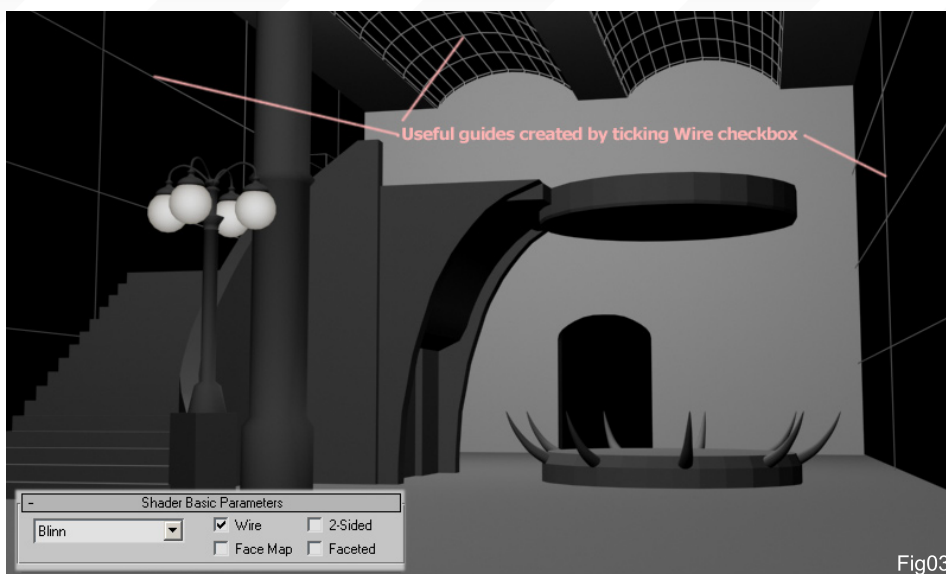


Fig03

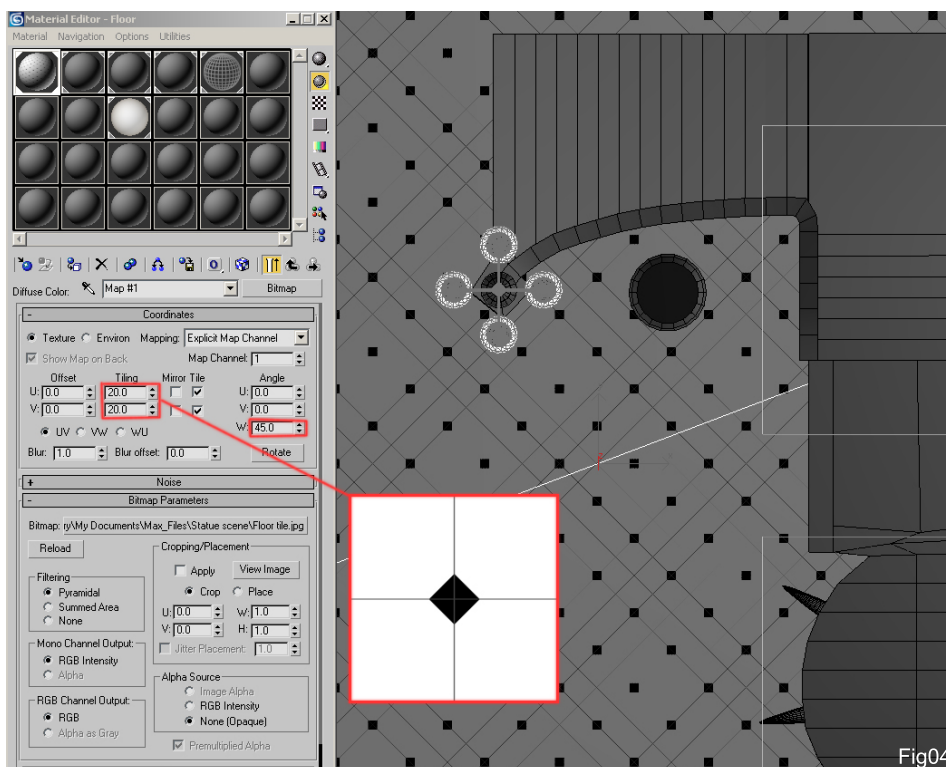


Fig04

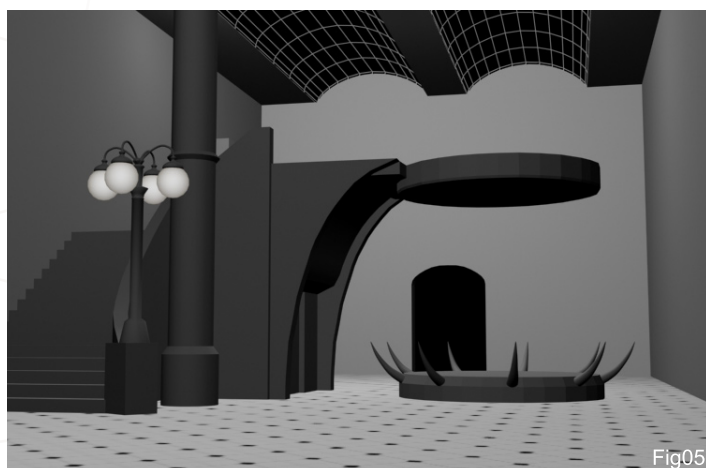


Fig05

useful as a perspective guide when adding further detail later on (Fig03). Another area where the use of 3D is particularly useful is in solving repeatable patterns in perspective, and in this case the floor tiles. I created a single tileable texture of a single tile which I then mapped onto the floor. Then in Max I altered the tiling amount to get the right scale (20 x 20) and rotated the angle of the map by 45 degrees, as seen in Fig04.

When the scene is rendered, it now creates a very quick and accurate template which can be masked later and used as an overlay in the painting stage (Fig05).

Starting the Painting

Before starting with the painting phase, decide on the size and proportions of the final image and then render out your 3D scene accordingly.

One thing that I briefly touched upon earlier was the notion of lighting. I have not decided to set up any lighting in the scene as I find it sometimes restricts ones artistic freedom. Lighting is a crucial aspect to any image and, as such for the sake of aesthetics, it is nice to be able to bend the truth a little, and in this case use it as a structural device which does not always comply with science! For this reason, I did not spend time setting up a perfect solution but rather used the 3D render purely for providing the perspective.

When you have decided on a satisfactory aspect, render out the image and open it in your respective painting program – in this case Photoshop.

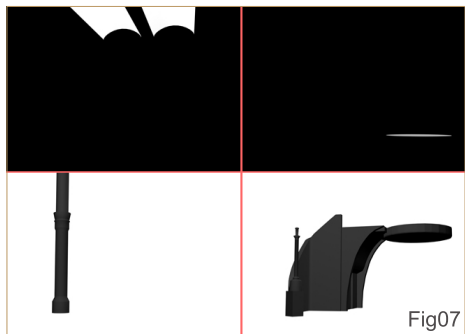


Fig07

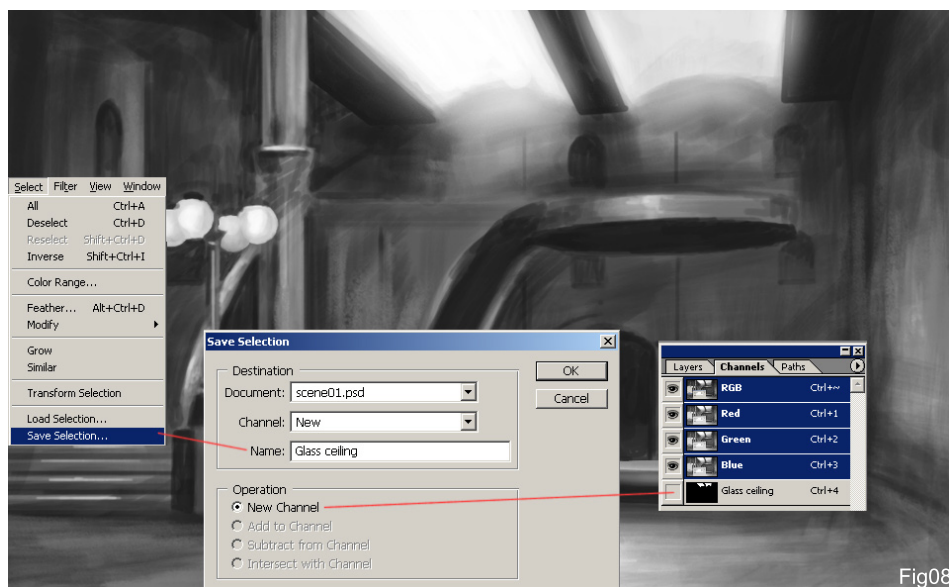


Fig08

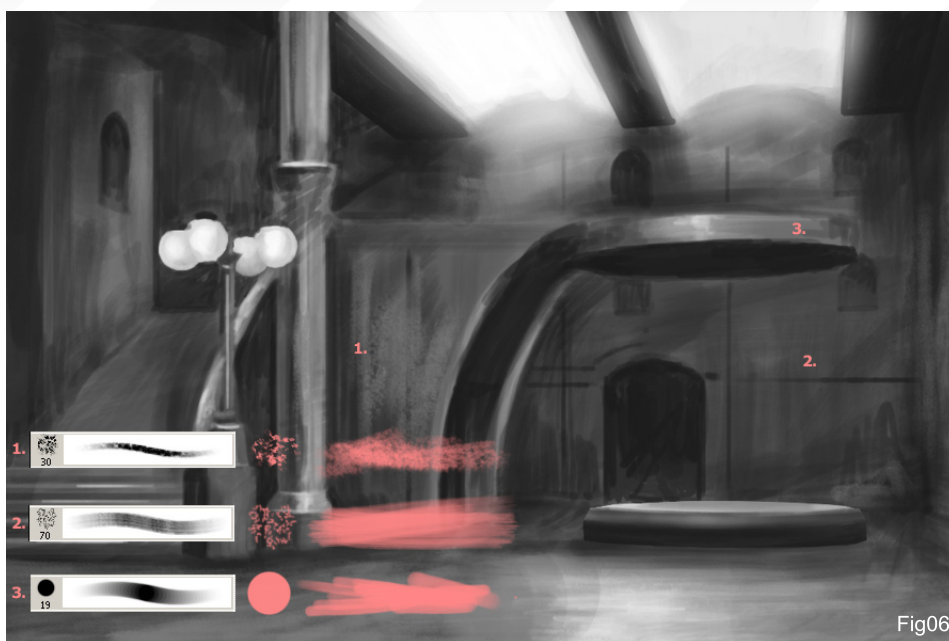


Fig06

I always keep this render on a separate layer as reference and immediately add a new one that will form the starting point of the painting.

This first layer will be a tonal version of the entire scene and will establish the light source and generally flesh out the light and dark passages in the painting (Fig06).

You can see in the picture that I have worked across the whole of the canvas and assumed a light source above the glass roof. Because I find lighting to be a key factor in most images, I often find that working in a purely tonal way to begin with means that I can determine how successful this aspect is early on, before adding any detail.

I have found that if the lighting is right then colour can be added on a new layer set to Soft Light or Overlay later on, and doesn't interfere.

You will notice in Fig06 that I have used predominantly three brushes to block in the tones. I try at this point to keep the strokes quite loose but still retain enough control to define the forms. I use brush 3 to provide the hard edges such as the column and ceiling, brush 2 to add a subtle variation to the surfaces that may suggest wear, and brush 1 to add a texture which may describe stone work.

You will also notice the very crisp edge to the oval floor plinth which was obtained by only rendering out these top facing polys on a black background in Max.

By rendering separate elements, such as those shown in Fig07, you can then use these templates to save specific selections which will enable you to make quick colour and tonal changes later during the painting process. The way this is done is by first rendering the selected geometry and then pasting this into the PSD as a new layer. You then use this to make a quick selection mask which can then be saved, as shown in Fig08. On the Menu bar, click Select – Save Selection, which opens



Fig09

a dialogue box, and then name the selection (which in this case is the Glass ceiling). This is now stored as a new channel which you can see in the Channels palette. You can follow this procedure as many times as you like and when you want to work on certain areas, click on Select again and this time choose Load Selection and then scroll through the list to the desired channel. You can see under "New Channel" in the Save Selection box that there are also three further radio buttons: Add to Channel, Subtract from Channel and Intersect with Channel. Once you have an area selected you can use these functions to modify selections, e.g. masking the foreground objects separately, such as the staircase, column and lamp.

These new channels can often come in handy later when you want to experiment with final lighting adjustments and colour variations without the need to manually mask intricate areas.

Now that we have covered the aspect of channels and rendering elements, I think it is time we added the main feature in our scene: the statue!

I had no specific idea in mind except that I wanted a rather heroic stance and dynamic posture that looked somewhat defiant (Fig09). I decided that a character with his arms stretched upward could always be modified to appear to be supporting the staircase.

I made the decision to have the statue look very white at this stage to imbue it with an ethereal quality, even though unrealistic. By copying this layer and flipping it vertically it becomes a quick and accurate reflection when set to an Overlay blending mode. I also added some definition to the steps and column as well as the glass roof.

Next month we will go on to refine the painting and add more detail, as well as begin work on the colouring phase. We will also see how the

3D scene continues to prove a helpful asset during the process.

Using 3D as a Starting Point for a Digital Painting

Tutorial by:

Richard Tilbury

You can contact him at:

rich@3dtotal.com

Next Month - Part 2:

We will continue by refining the painting in more detail and referring back to the 3D scene to further polish the details and eventually begin the colouring phase.



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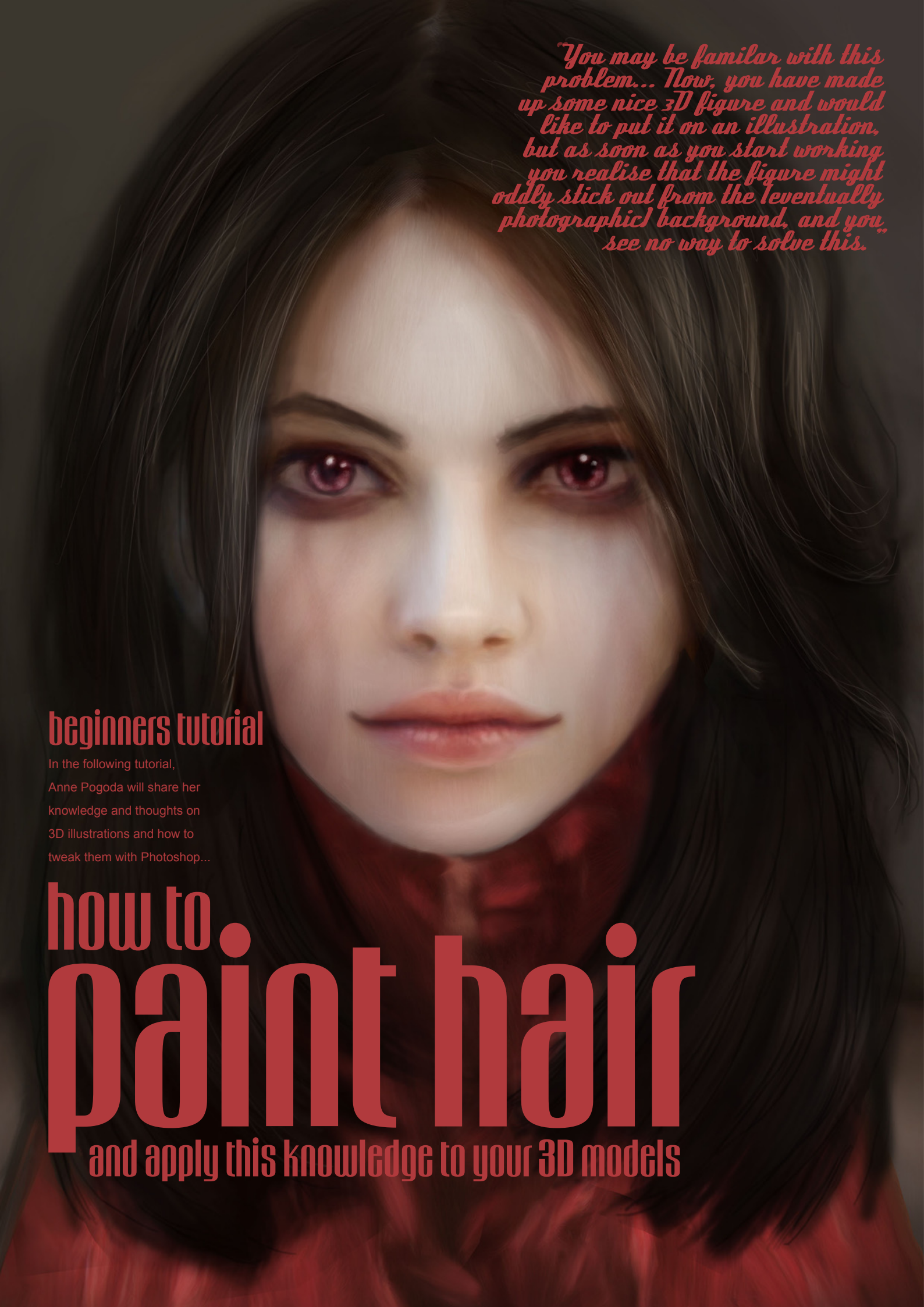
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"You may be familiar with this problem... Now, you have made up some nice 3D figure and would like to put it on an illustration, but as soon as you start working you realise that the figure might oddly stick out from the eventually photographic background, and you see no way to solve this."

beginners tutorial

In the following tutorial, Anne Pogoda will share her knowledge and thoughts on 3D illustrations and how to tweak them with Photoshop...

how to paint hair

and apply this knowledge to your 3D models

how to paint hair

and apply this knowledge to your 3D models

Created In:

Photoshop

You may be familiar with this problem... Now, you have made up some nice 3D figure and would like to put it on an illustration, but as soon as you start working you realise that the figure might oddly stick out from the (eventually photographic) background, and you see no way to solve this. The same applies when you have reached a point where you become stuck with your modelling knowledge, but would like to have a nice portrait, for instance. It could then be very useful to know how to touch up a model later on using Photoshop.

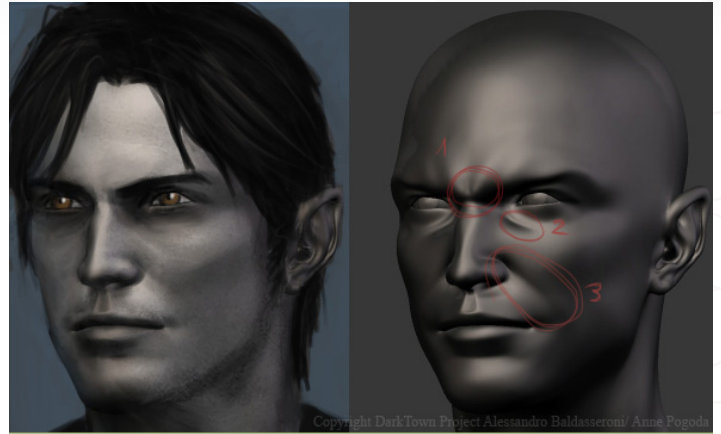
In the following tutorial, I will share the knowledge that I gained from working with Alessandro Baldasseroni's models (www.eklettica.com) and will share my thoughts on 3D illustrations and how to tweak them using Photoshop.

In the following two examples, featuring a man, you can see how I made some refinements to the renders of his face whilst they were still work in progress. Being able to paint something in always gives you the chance to see pretty quickly if something will meet your wishes, or not.

In **Screenshot 1**, I have painted in some basic hair for instance, and some facial features such as eyes and eyebrows. This didn't take any longer than 10 minutes, and made it easy to tell if the features would work with the figure design.

In **Screenshot 2**, you can see a further progress of the same model which has already undergone some needed corrections which we were able to gauge from **screenshot 1**. Here I made a more detailed overpainting, taking around 30 minutes, which gave the face some texture and helped achieve a final impression of what the model would look like when finished. I was then immediately able to mark things which had to be changed. Because Alessandro received these over paintings from me, he also knew pretty well what I wanted to be applied to his model.

The same technique can also be very useful when you are working on



head2front.jpg @ 50% (RGB/8#)



Screenshot 1



Screenshot 2

your own and, as I said before, if you don't know which flaw could eventually be found in your model. This is why I would like to guide you through several tutorials, starting with how to paint hair, so that you will be able to create such a preview to see if your model is evolving the way you desire, or paint a touched up final illustration. You can even to paint something from scratch if you'd like to!

Before we get started, I want you to create a brush which will make it much easier for you to paint hair. Please note that this brush is not necessarily needed to gain a good result, but for a beginner it's vital to have some "help" which makes it possible for you to reach this desired result in the easiest and best way.

Create a Speckled Brush For Hair

First of all, take it easy. Creating a brush in Photoshop is one of the simplest things you could imagine. Simply create a new file at 100 x 100 pixels in size, create a new layer, set the paint colour to black, and then paint in some dots as I have done in the example [Fig. CreateBrush1](#). The dots should vary in size and shouldn't go too close to the border of the image.

After you have finished your little dots and are satisfied with them, you can either call it "art" and sell it for a few bucks, or go to the Edit menu and choose "Define Brush Preset", as shown in [Fig. CreateBrush2](#). Now you can choose a name for your brush. I called mine "AzuSpackle", but it can have any name you desire ([Fig. CreateBrushes03](#))

Now go to the Brushes window, in the upper right corner of Photoshop, and open it. And there is the new brush! (And it took you how long, now? 10 minutes?)

Now all we have to do is make some final settings in the Brush Tip Shape menu. Tick the Other Dynamics and Smoothing boxes, and set

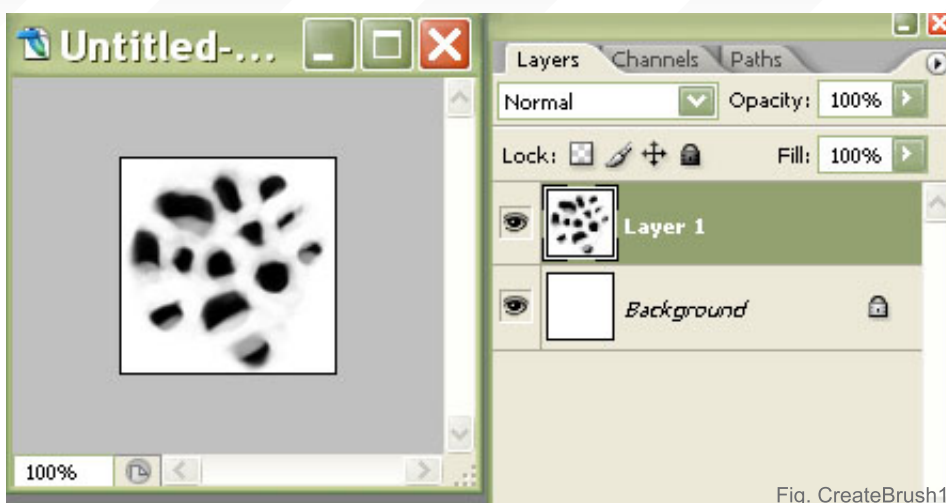


Fig. CreateBrush1

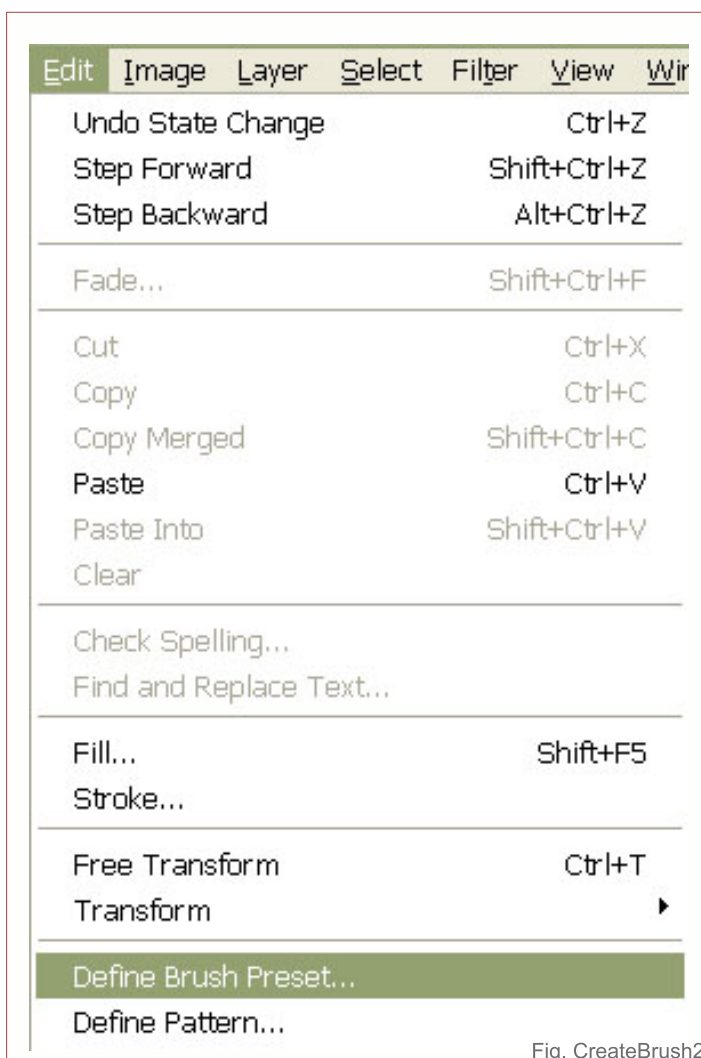


Fig. CreateBrush2



Fig. CreateBrush3

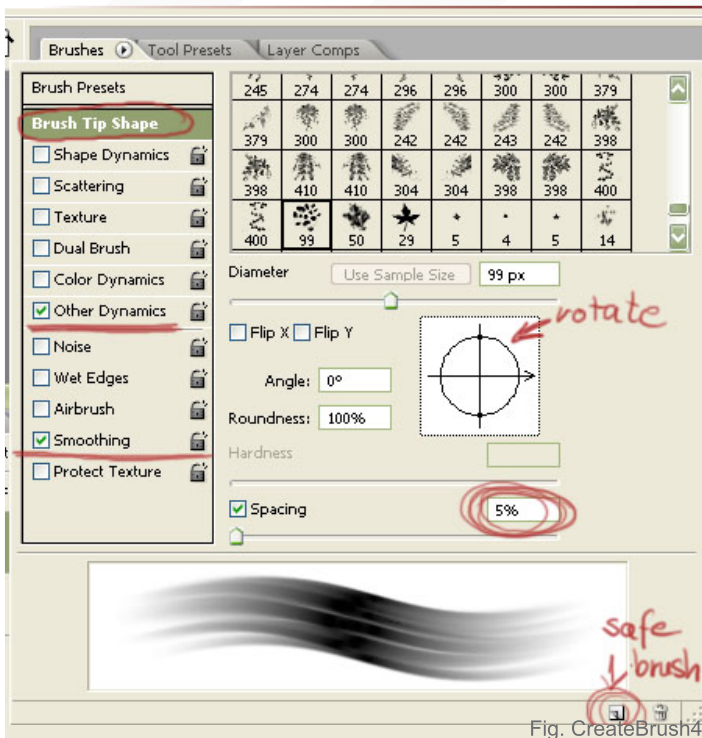


Fig. CreateBrush4



Fig. FinishedBrush

the Spacing to 5%. This makes your little dots all connect together to create a hair-like strand. With the Rotate function you can also spin your brush a little if it doesn't look "hairy" enough to you, yet.

Are you satisfied? Then don't forget to save your brush by clicking the little symbol next to the rubbish bin on the bottom right (FigCreatebrush04).

Brushes Used

In the following screenshot (Fig.FeatuuredBrush), I have collected all the brushes that I have used. As you can see, there are just two there; one is the speckled brush we just have created. Don't worry, it really doesn't take us more than this to paint hair, for beginners.

Painting the Hair

Finally, we can get started with the hair...

Step 1 - Setting up a Base

The girl in our example is the same girl from an older painting of mine (Fig.Furry) which I have colour adjusted in Painter to abuse it for this tutorial. You can also see her as a base, like a just finished model you'd like to tweak in



Fig. Furry



Fig. Colour Picker

Photoshop. Let's say you oddly destroyed the hair of your model and are close to giving up, but Photoshop gives you the following opportunity to save what you already have...

Choose the speckled brush and pick the darkest colour (Fig. Colour Picker) from the supplied colour picker, above. The colour picker is very important for this tutorial. If you don't know how to get this picker from my tutorial, simply take a screenshot, open Photoshop, press Ctrl + N and hit Enter - and there is your colour picker!

So now we're going to define our base, as shown in Fig01. All you need to do now is to paint in some basic shapes for the hair. Note how the hair is flooding around her head and keep in mind that hair, if not wet, is always soft and fluffy.

Step 2 – Painting in First Strands

Now the base is ready, we'll predefine some strands now. (Don't worry, we'll keep it relaxed.) Stay with your speckled brush and pick colour number 1 from my colour picker, then paint in some random strands (the size of the brush is up to your desires) which follow the shape of the base head, as shown in Fig02.

Then choose the eraser and set its opacity to around 30%. Pick an airbrush with soft edges, as shown in the brushes part of this tutorial. Now set the size of your eraser to nearly the same size as the speckled brush that you've been using to paint in the strands. Note that the hair always reflects the light at the top of its curl, which is why we'll carefully start to erase parts of the hair now which are further down, until we've achieved a desirable effect.

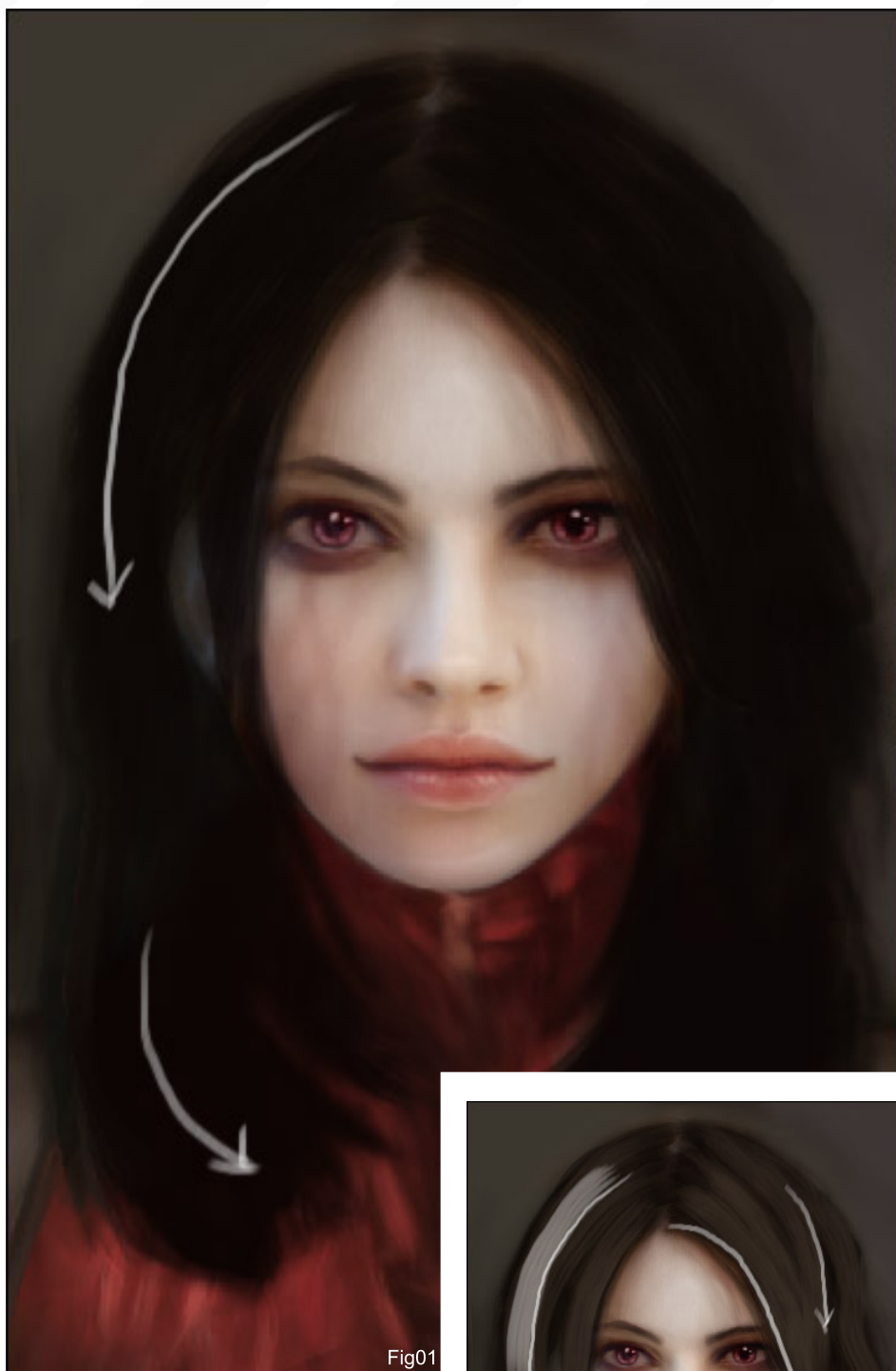


Fig01

Step 3 – Working on the Curls

Fig03 shows more closely how I have carefully erased all the parts around her head which should appear darker because they are on the lower side of the curl.

Do you see understand why it makes sense to paint something only to erase it later on? Remember that the eraser is just set to 30%, which means that the structure of the hair we

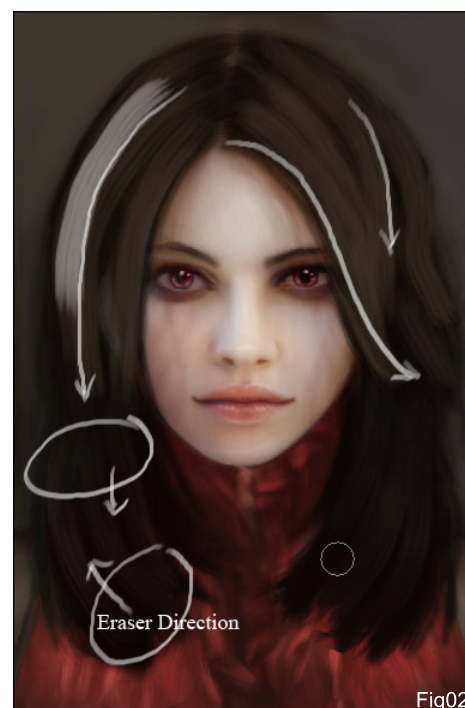


Fig02

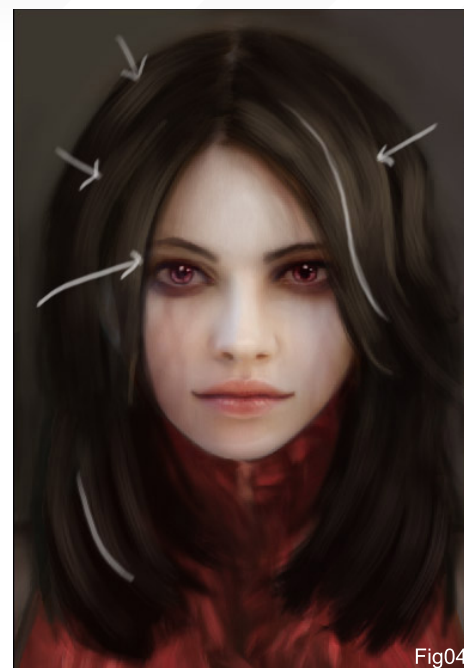
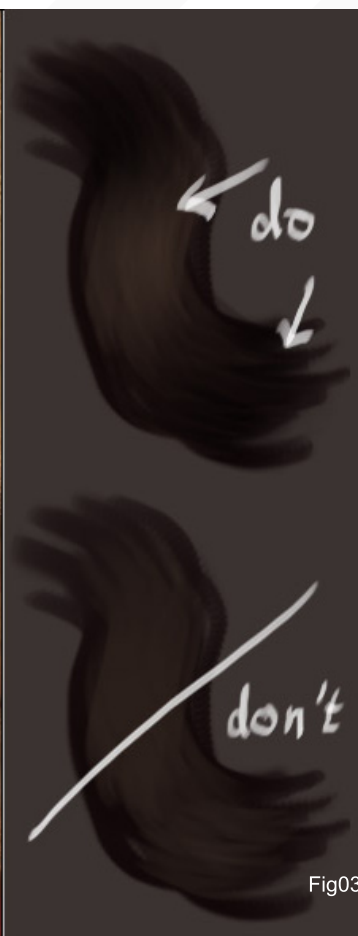
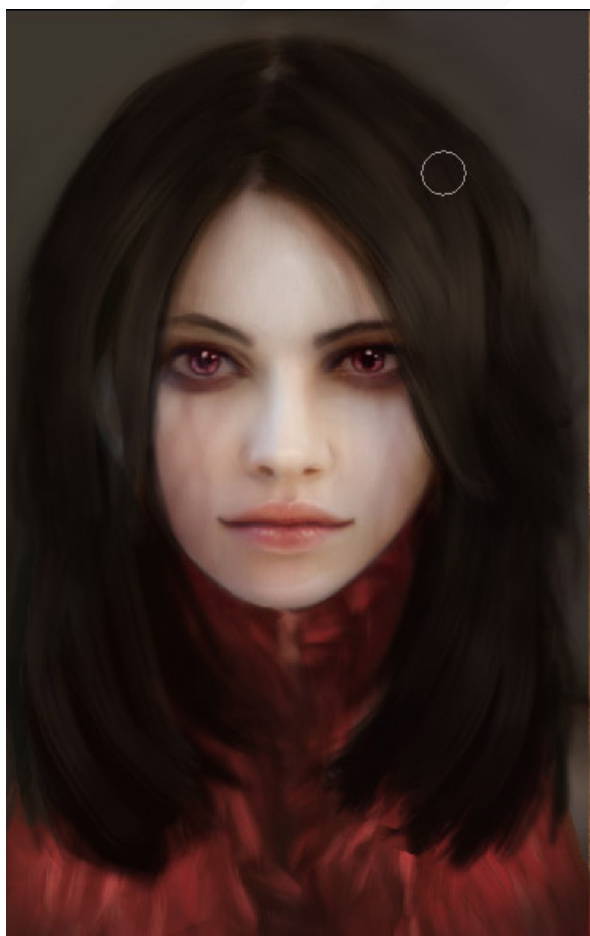


Fig04



Fig05



Fig06

have just achieved using the speckled brush, will stay intact - we just bring in some colour variation by making it less intense at some parts with the eraser. If you need more help to understand this, then step in front of a mirror and observe your own hair (or your girlfriend's hair if you don't have long hair yourself). Pay attention to where the light hits the most.

Step 4

We will now repeat what we have just done in steps 2 and 3, but this time we will pick a lighter colour (numbers 2 or 5 from my colour picker). Pay most attention to the very tops of the curls and remember to paint the hair using the speckled brush first, and then work over it with the eraser afterwards. You can also paint in some smaller strands here and there, at this stage (Fig04).

Step 5 – Painting in Smaller Strands

The hair is already looking neat at the moment, but we can make it so much better... Set the

speckled brush to a smaller size and start to paint in smaller strands to define the exact shape of the hair, as seen in Fig05.

Step 6 – What Is Our Focus?

We can now zoom in a bit and, still working with colour number 2, choose an even smaller speckled brush to paint in some single hairs (Fig06). Work your way around her head - this is our focus, so it needs the most attention.

Choosing a focus is always a great technique to evolve the quality of your illustrations, because you can lead the viewer's eyes as you wish using this simple method.

Note that I have lit the ends of the two strands which are closest to her face (Fig06) a little because they are popping out, and so the same rule as for the top of a hair curl should be applied to them, too. Most of the highlights go here.

Step 7 – Bring In Variation by Adding Tiny Hairs

The image looks good with the smaller hairs added, but since they're all painted using the same highlight colour, it's a little boring. To bring some variation to the painting, choose a very dark colour now, such as number 4 from my colour picker. For this task, we will get away from our speckled brush and work with the soft-edged airbrush set to a very small size, like 3, 5 or 7 pixels (whatever works best for you), and its opacity set to 90% (Fig07).

You can now paint in many tiny lines for hairs - don't be afraid to go wild! Think about hair: it would never follow one single direction - it will always fluff around and so your brush strokes need to, as well.

Step 8 – Connecting the Hair with the Background

We can now take a look at step 8, which doesn't seem to vary much from step 7, so I'll simply tell you what I've done here... I set the airbrush to a bigger size and set its opacity to around 30%. I then painted some of the background colour over the edges of the hair to bring in a better connection with the background. I also used the airbrush set to a rather small size, using colour number 4 from my colour picker, to better define some strands of hair (Fig08).

Step 9 – Going Wild with Colours

Let's now take a look at step 9 (don't worry, I haven't destroyed the picture, I just wanted to give it some variety in colour). This colour will hardly be seen by the naked eye later, but the fact that it's there makes the hair much livelier (although this doesn't mean that you have to apply extra colours each time you paint hair; it's still all down to your personal taste).

You may have noticed earlier that the hair we have painted isn't pure black. When you take a look at the colour picker, you will see that all colours from 1 to 5 have a more or less reddish touch to them, which is good.



Fig07



Fig08

Black hair that has white applied to it as a highlight, will look artificial. This is why you should always use a coloured touch to your blacks, since most dark hair in nature isn't pure black but is a very dark brown. So, in this case, I suggest using a reddish touch (Fig09).

The above also explains my decision to bring in some blue at this point, because blue makes a contrast with red, which easily and immediately explains why the hair will look livelier with some blue spots added to it. (Besides this, the surrounding background colour suggests our eyes to be of a blueish tone, so it makes sense to have it reflect some blue tones into the hair).

Sticking with our airbrush, setting it to around 30% opacity and using a rather big size, wildly scribble in some blueish areas (we will then erase most of it with the eraser in a minute). Remember what I said earlier about the sense of painting something in to erase it later on? Well, it makes it easier for us to connect the new applied colour to what we already have and to make it all blend together nicely.

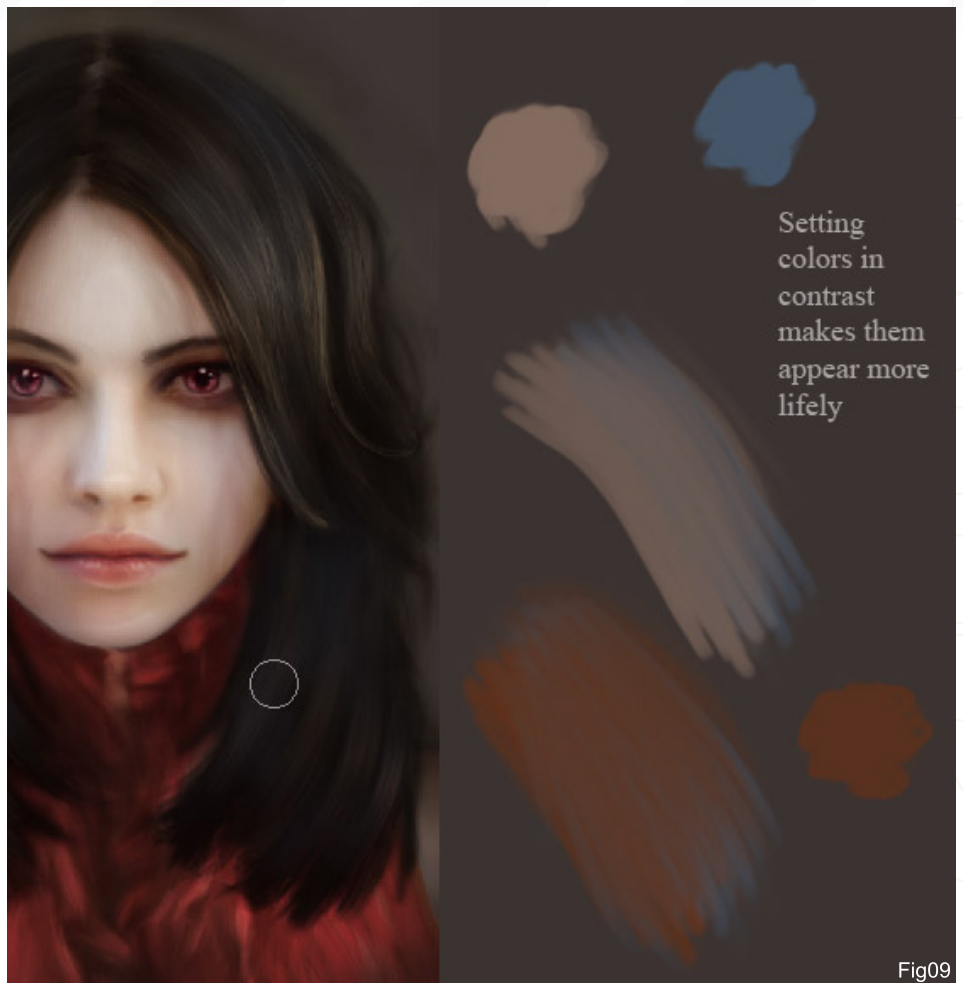


Fig09

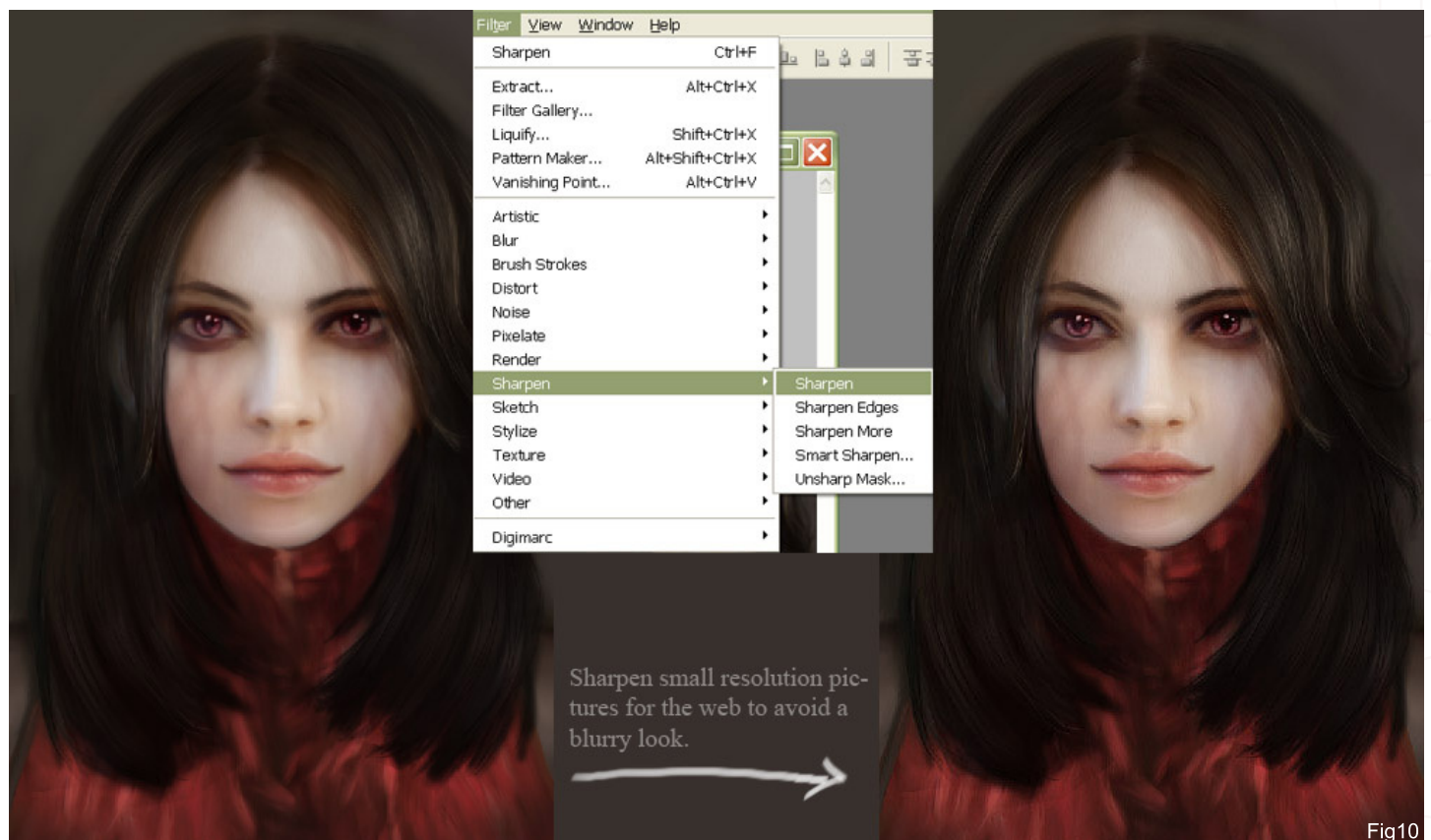


Fig10

Step 10 – Useful Filter for Web Resolutions

Working with colours 3 and 4 from my colour picker and using the smallest airbrush you could possibly ever work with, set to around 90% opacity, we will now paint in some last tiny hairs and erase back what's popping out too much to give it the final touch-up.

Now you are finished but you want to save your image for the web to show it to your friends. Since it's usually suggested to work on at least 300 dpi for a print ready file, it's not suggested to exhibit 300 dpi files on the web. So this is why we can edit the dpi count in the Image Size window (found in the Image menu). Let's say you have now manually set your image to 72 dpi to show it to your friends; the image has been sized down, but you also discovered it looks blurry! Well luckily, Photoshop delivers us a great filter pack to avoid this problem. Simply go to the Filters menu and pick the Sharpening filter of your desire. Great, huh? And finally, your image is ready for web exhibition now!

Anne Pogoda

For more from this artist visit:

www.darktownart.de



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*"...she advised me to use
the "Just Odd Water"
blender brush. It was
perfect for making this
kind of image."*



In this Making Of, Vlad Kuprienko
will show us how he created Cold
Sky using Painter X and its default
brushes...

COLD SKY

MAKING OF

COLD SKY

Created In:

Painter X

Welcome to this Making Of. I'm Vlad Kuprienko and I'm Ukrainian 3D artist currently working freelance creating models, sketches, animations, fantasy and sci-fi illustrations, interior visualisations and working with web design. I've been working in the commercial CG industry for 2 years, now.

Firstly, I would like to mention the process, methodology and software that I use when I work. I normally do a lot of sketches before I

start creating a scene or a model. The main software that I use is Carrara and Hexagon, which are not so popular, but I believe they're a good choice for creating great pictures in a short time, if compared with 3DS Max or Lightwave XSI. Hexagon has all the tools you need to create and texture your model and render it in a great environment using Carrara. It has all new features like SSS, GI and so on, but it also has ultra fast and powerful rendering. In Fig01, you can see an interface of Skylab in Carrara. One day, I decided to create a picture called "Cold Sky", and after a few test renders I saw that Carrara couldn't give me the desired mood. Having done a lot of sketches using Painter in the past (I love this application!), I decided to give it a try...

In this Making Of, I'm going to show you how to make this kind of work using 10 colour palettes and using standard Painter brushes only. This

work was made by adapting my experience from doing sketches for 3D, and applying them in Painter X using my old renders as reference material (Fig02).

The Concept

Before creating this picture in Painter, I initially planned to include the surface of the sea, but then decided that a boundless would work better for the concept.

When I knew exactly that I was going to paint a sky scene, I started work on the background by filling a white sheet with a main colour, using Flat Colour Pens. You will see from Fig03 that I marked the darkest and brightest parts of the picture so that the composition began to emerge. This was the last time that I used blender brushes, until the detailing stage. Thanks to my friend, a professional artist, she advised me to use the "Just Add Water" blender

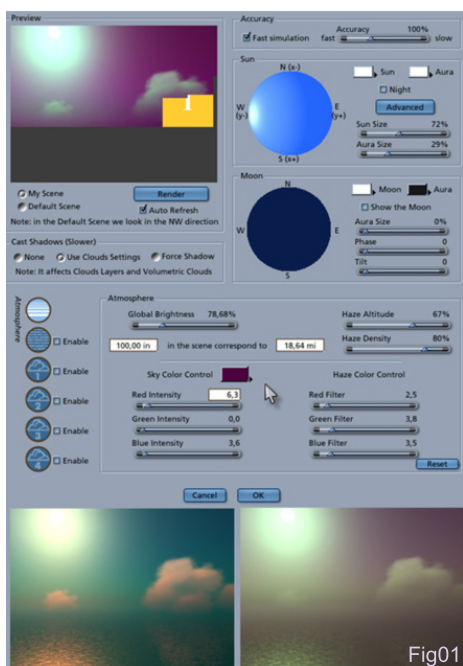


Fig01



Fig02

brush. It was perfect for making this kind of image.

Shine!

I already knew where the Sun was going to be, so it was possible for me to paint the brightest parts of the sky. With this type of picture, the contrast works well (Fig04).

While painting smaller clouds, I decided on what would be the main object in my scene. I looked to see if I had any old models or ideas that I would be able to add to this piece, and luckily I found an old 3D model of a steam-punk flying ship! Unfortunately, I didn't take any screenshots whilst I painted the ship, but it's not too difficult to make one afterwards. I thought that adding the small ship as the main focus for the piece would work, although some would say that the composition isn't the best. For me, the small ship works much better than a huge one because it shows the boundless sky, and shows what a human machine actually looks like when compared to nature which can be so kind and beautiful at times. Also, if you are drawing moving objects, it's important to remember that there must be space where the object is moving in to. I used a Layout Grid in Painter (Canvas > Compositions) to place ship correctly (Fig05 - 06).

More Clouds...

At this stage, I was looking for the cloud shapes. As you can see, I started drawing in the borders of the clouds. You will also notice that the Sun is behind the clouds, which gives them that nicely lit border.

Brushes

From here on in, I want to show you the brushes that I used to create this

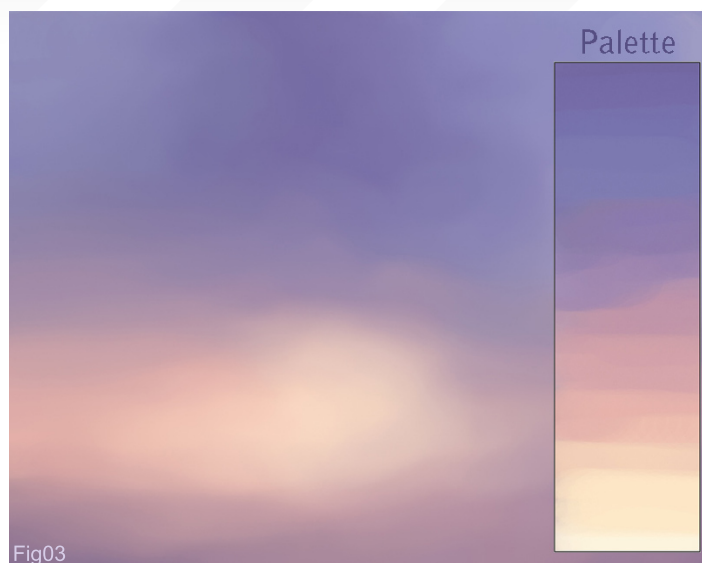


Fig03

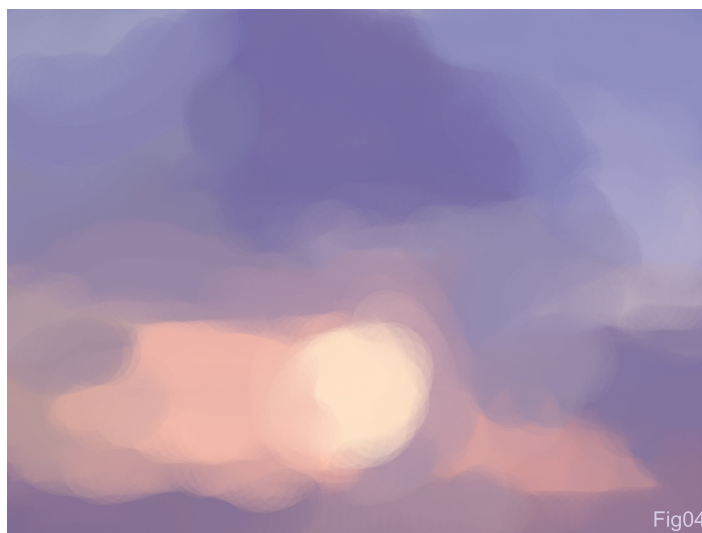


Fig04



Fig05

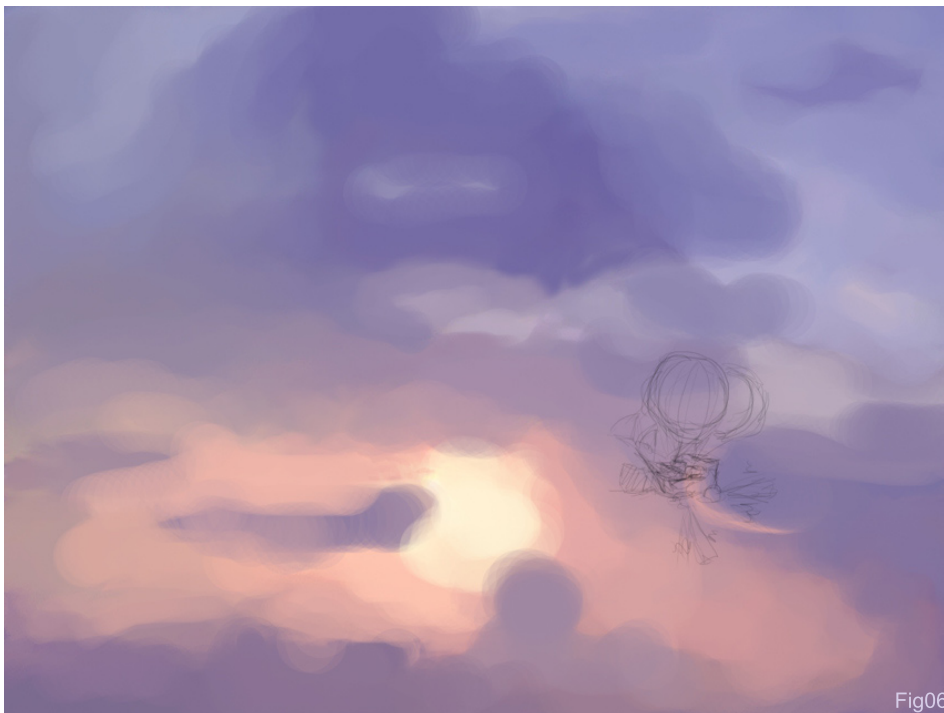


Fig06

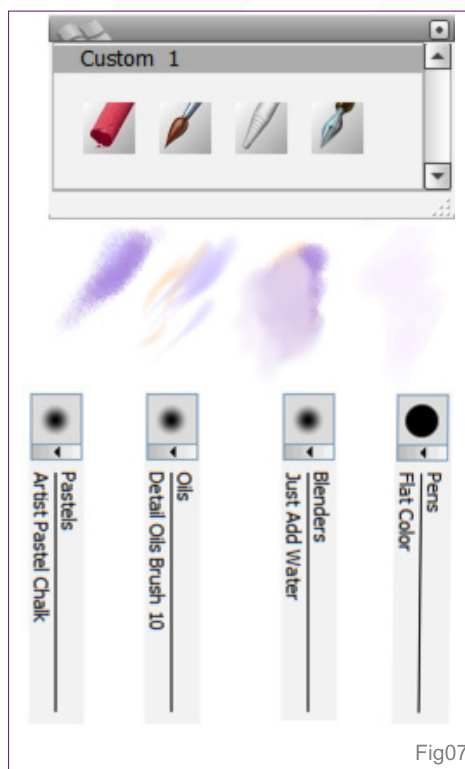


Fig07

picture. I also wish to prove that there is no need to create extra brushes in Painter every time you paint a new piece...

Fig07 and 08 were painted using only the Flat Colour Pens brush, and the Blender brush for blurring. Do not be afraid to use large Pen brushes with the transparency near 10, as it will work great when blending colours! When you start to add some detail, just use smaller brush sizes and play with the transparency.

I decided to change the shape of the cloud near the Sun, and you can see that some small details were also drawn above the Sun, here. For this, I used another great and universal brush: Detail Oils Brush. I used spots of colours that stayed whilst drawing using big brushes, and made small clouds, or parts of clouds, from them by adding details (Fig09).

I then used the Artist Pastel Chalk brush when adding details and making the clouds fluffier - a really great brush for this type of work. Now looking at the six steps shown in Fig10, the first and second picture capture colours using the Dropper Tool and a big Pen brush. I started

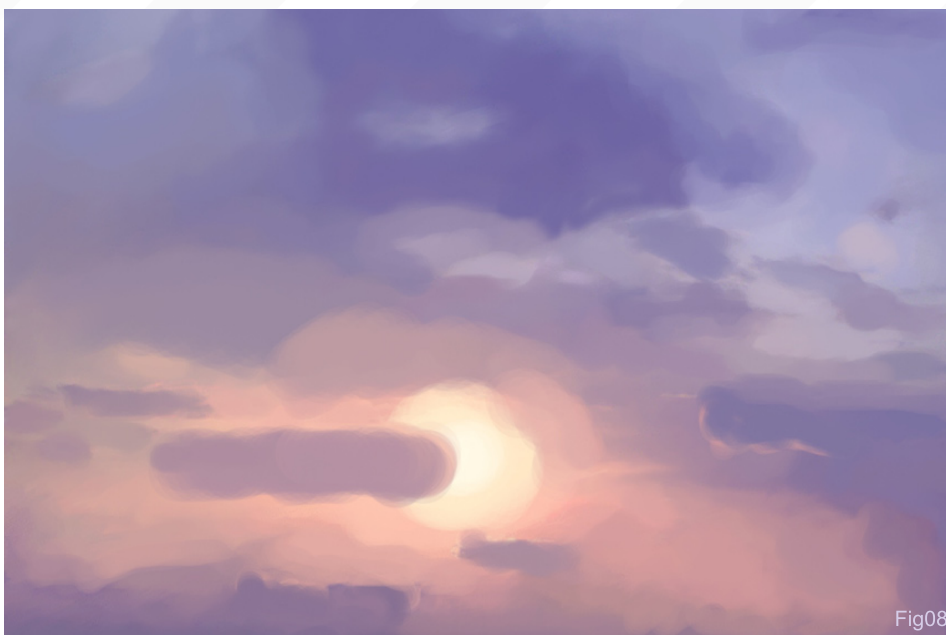


Fig08

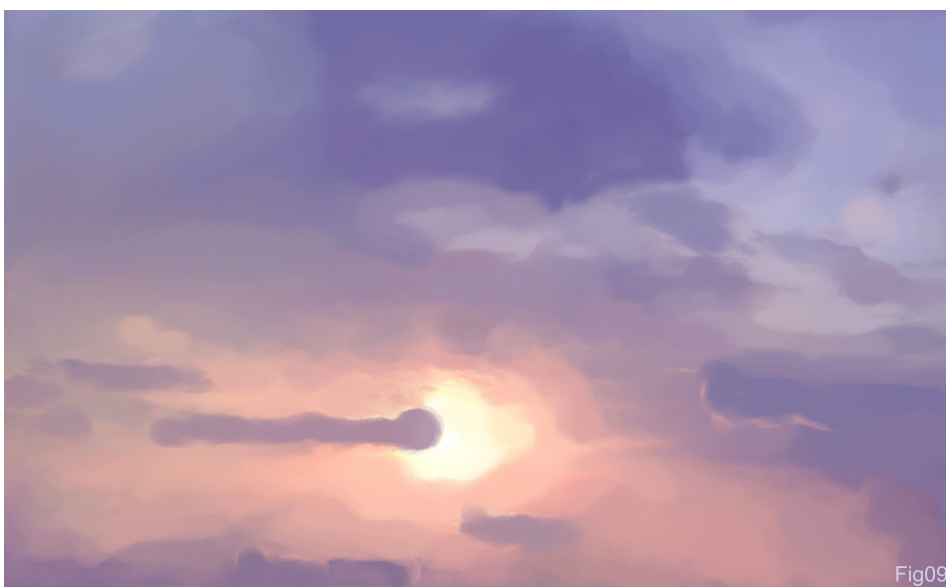


Fig09

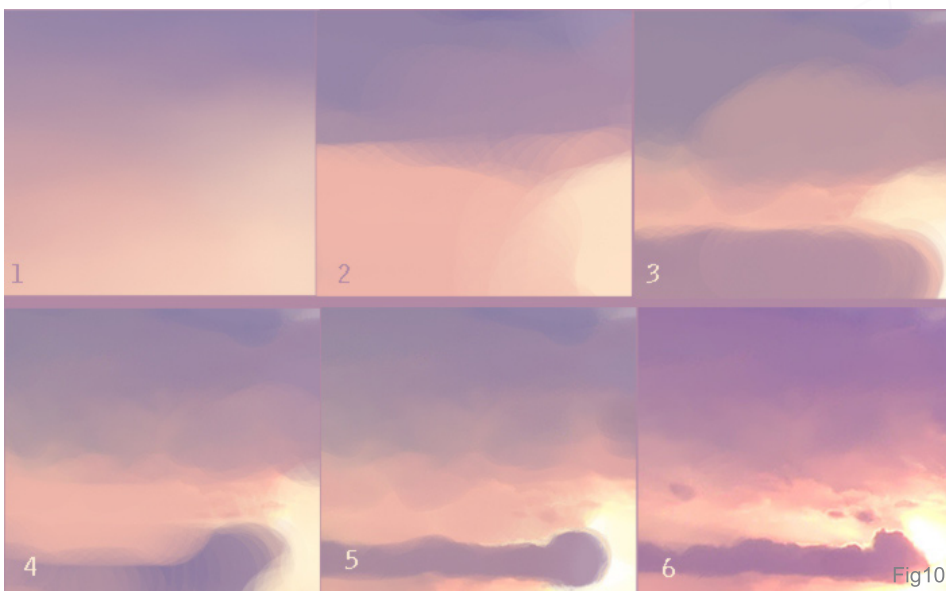


Fig10

placing main colours and, in the third and fourth steps, I simply took a smaller brush and added more colours. **Note:** painting with high transparency helps you to achieve good colour blending. I then started on the details using the Oils and Blender brushes (Fig10).

Speed Painting!

Here, I wanted to show you how I created a speed painting of some clouds using only a Pastel brush and a Blender brush. By the way, don't use pure blacks or whites, as this will only make your picture look dirty. Instead, try mixing colours, like dark blues or browns, which will work much better (Fig11).

Again, for this, I started by filling a background with base colours. For the last step, I added some rain effects on the left. As you can see, using just the Pastel brush you can make some really nice clouds (Fig12 -14).

Colour Correction

Moving back to the Cold Sky image, when all the details were painted and the main object was placed on the picture, it was then time to do some colour correction work in Photoshop.



Fig11



Fig12



Fig13

I decided that I should use a more romantic colour, and so I added a touch of red (Fig15).

Final Editing

So, for this image (Fig15), I've simply adjusted the contrast and brightness a little, which I think is something that everyone should do, even if you think that the contrast is OK. Try setting it to a higher level and you will see just how your image starts to look better. I didn't use the Crop tool for this image, but it's a good way to change the composition of your piece, if you need to.

And finally, here it the finished piece (Fig16 - Final Image). I hope you have enjoyed and found this making of useful. Before I go, I would like to give you some final tips and advice which

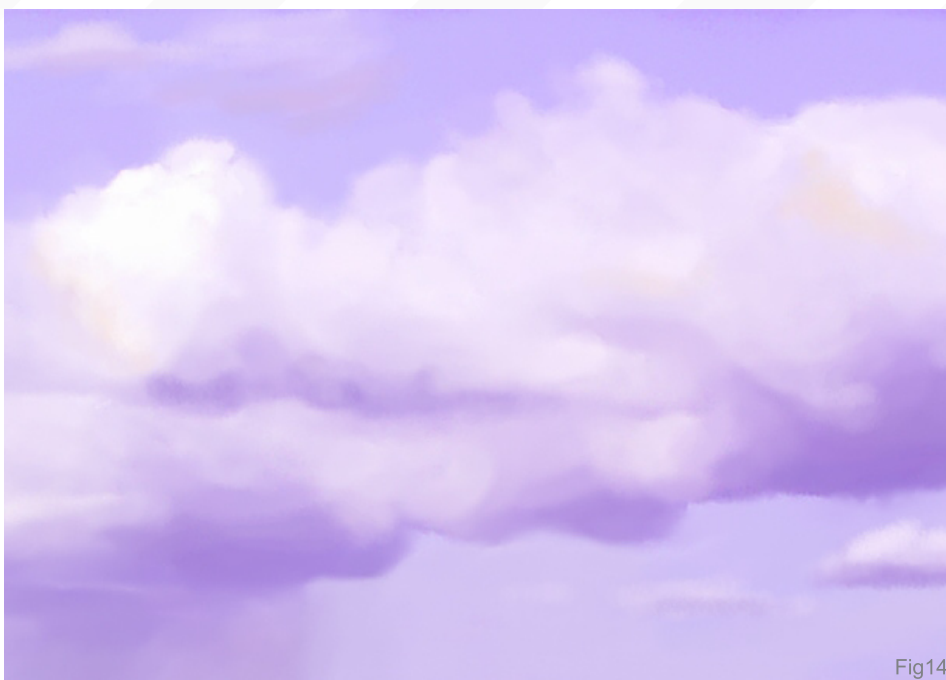


Fig14

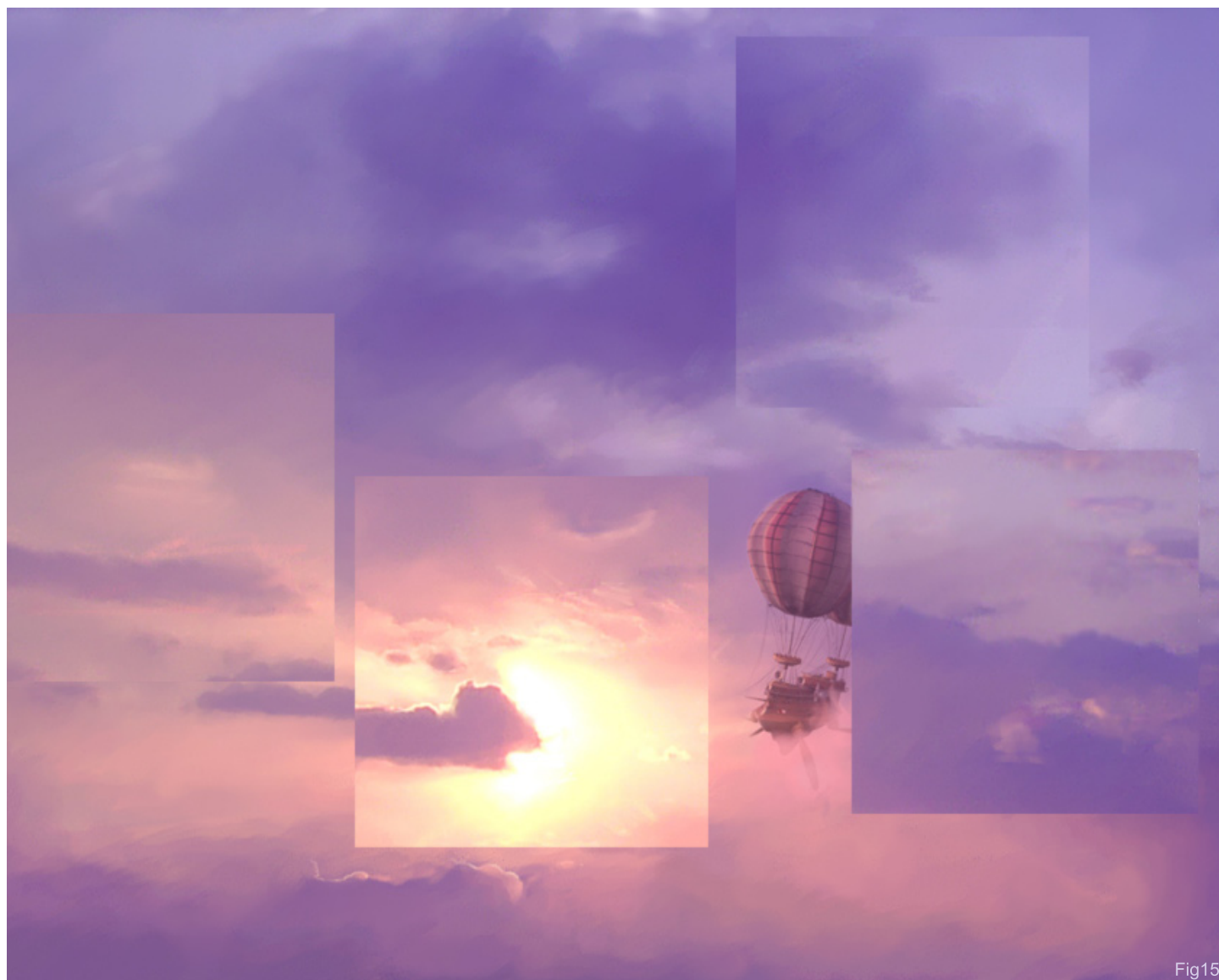


Fig15

"Cold sky" By Duke



Fig16 - final Image

I have learned through the making of Cold Sky...

1. Don't try doing small details right from the beginning. It's the same principle as when painting with oils or acrylic: draw the whole picture first, and it will help you to draw from the soul of the image.

2. Don't use pure blacks or whites! It will just make your picture dirty. Try mixing colours, such as dark blues or browns, and they will work much better.

3. If you are drawing moving objects, it's important to remember that there must be space where the object is moving in to.

4. Always try to use tools that will help you to create the right composition, like the Layout Grid

in Painter (Canvas > Compositions) which can help you to place your main objects correctly.

5. Using colour correction in Photoshop can help you if you used colour that isn't quite suitable for the final image.

Thanks for taking the time to read this making of. I am always open to advice, suggestions and critiques, because I am still learning myself and wish to improve my skills, so I'd be happy if you dropped me a line or visited my portfolio: www.dreamlab.comgran.ru/~portfolio

Vlad Kuprienko aka Duke

For more from this artist visit:

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Image by Stuart Jennett

"I don't think I have a particular style, but I like to experiment from time to time, to find new ways, techniques and new tricks."

This self portrait is brought to you by Dominus, a freelance designer who spends most of his time working on character concepts and illustrations...

SELF VERSION

SELF VERSION

I think that every artist has done a self portrait at some point or other, as it is the closest thing you have for reference: yourself. It's a challenge and it shows in the end how you, the artist, see yourself. I've done just a few self portraits in the past; mostly I work freelance on character concepts and illustrations which leave me with little time for myself, but when I do get some spare time I like to experiment and make a challenge for myself by doing something better than the last time. Being a big Android fan, I decided to look at his works a bit more to try and understand where he started, how he created his pictures, and what the steps were...

First of all, I must say that this piece was not intended as an accurate self portrait, but rather as an experiment of new techniques learned from Andrew Jones. OK, so let's get started...

This is something new for me, by which I mean that the portrait is not really my style. I don't believe that I have a particular style, though, but I do like to experiment from time to time in order to find new ways, techniques and new tricks. This portrait was created after I studied the way



Fig01

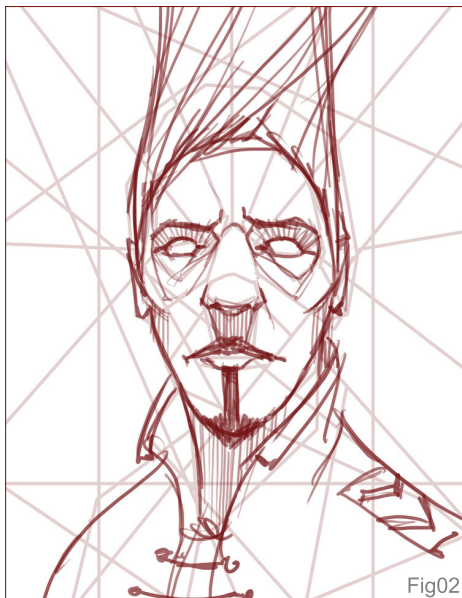


Fig02

Android creates his digital artworks, and decided not to copy, but to understand how he made them whilst creating something of my own. I decided to create a portrait, but wanted to make it more entertaining, so I began with a not-very-accurate self portrait...

On a new layer, I blocked in the shape of the head and face with random lines. Well, actually, there were not so random as I tried to keep a centre of interest. Following that, I lowered the opacity a little (Fig01).

On another new layer, I drew the basic contour of the face and head and added some small

details, like the crazy hair and some shadows. I named this layer, "drawing" (Fig02 - 03).

Yet another layer was created, under the first two, where I start spreading around random custom brushes. I experimented some more and, when I thought it was enough, I created another layer, set it to Overlay, and began the colour process by filling the layer with a saturated blue. Then, with a soft eraser, I deleted some parts of the blue layer so that some of the red layer nicely blended with the blue one (Fig04 - 06).

Next, I repeated the process but set the layers





Fig04



Fig05

to different states (Vivid Light, Screen, etc.), and continued deleting some parts of the layers on the top until I was happy with the result.

I then Google searched for some newspaper textures and applied them using the same method. At the end, I created a Normal layer on top, added the final details, and made some Level adjustments. And then I was all done (Fig07 - 09).

And that's it! As you can see, the process is



Fig06



Fig07



Fig08

Dominus

For more from this artist visit:

www.pandemoniumart.net

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